

Overview of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations

Introduction

1. ASEAN and Japan first established informal dialogue relations in 1973, which was later formalised in March 1977 with the convening of the ASEAN-Japan Forum. Since then, significant progress has been made in all areas of political security, economic-finance and socio-cultural cooperation.
2. Japan acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia in July 2004. It was the first Dialogue Partner to appoint a Jakarta-based Ambassador to ASEAN. The Mission of Japan to ASEAN was established on 26 May 2011.
3. At the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in December 2003 in Tokyo, the Leaders signed the “Tokyo Declaration for the Dynamic and Enduring ASEAN-Japan Partnership in the New Millennium” which, together with its Plan of Action, served as the roadmap in moving ASEAN-Japan relations forward until 2010.
4. An Eminent Persons Group (EPG) was established in 2008 to take stock of relations and make recommendations to strengthen the partnership. The EPG Report with its recommendations was submitted to the 12th ASEAN-Japan Summit in October 2009.
5. At the 14th ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2011 in Bali, the Leaders issued the Joint Declaration for Enhancing ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Prospering Together (Bali Declaration) and adopted the ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action 2011-2015. These two documents took into account the recommendations of the EPG Report.
6. ASEAN and Japan commemorated the 40th Anniversary of Dialogue Relations in 2013. At the Commemorative Summit in December 2013 in Tokyo, the Leaders adopted a Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and a Joint Statement with the theme “Hand in hand, facing regional and global challenges”. The Vision Statement and its Implementation Plan served as framework to further strengthen ASEAN-Japan relations and support ASEAN Community-building beyond 2015. A revised Implementation Plan was adopted at the ASEAN+1 PMC with Japan in August 2017 taking into account the ASEAN Vision 2025 including the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and IAI Work Plan III.
7. ASEAN and Japan commemorated the 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2018. At the 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2018 in Singapore, the Leaders adopted a Joint Statement on Commemoration of the 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation reaffirming the commitment to further strengthen the partnership.
8. At the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on 12 November 2020, the Leaders adopted the Joint Statement on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) to enhance practical cooperation in the four areas outlined in the AOIP.

Political and Security Cooperation

9. ASEAN and Japan conduct their dialogue relations through various mechanisms, including the ASEAN-Japan Summit, Ministerial Meetings, Senior Officials and Experts Meetings. Japan has also been engaged in ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF).

10. Japan has been part of the ARF since its inception in 1994. Japan has co-chaired and co-hosted ARF activities with various ASEAN Member States in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping operations, disaster relief, counter-terrorism and transnational crime, maritime security, defence cooperation, marine environment protection and space security. Japan has also been a regular contributor to the ARF Annual Security Outlook (ARF ASO) since its first publication in 2000.

11. ASEAN – Japan Defence Ministers Informal Meeting was first held on 19 November 2014 in Bagan, Myanmar, in which, the Ministers agreed to continue dialogue on ASEAN – Japan Defence cooperation in dealing with non-traditional security threats. At the sidelines of the ADMM Retreat in November 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, Japan launched the “Vientiane Vision: Japan’s Defence Cooperation Initiative with ASEAN”.

12. Japan Defence Ministers attended the ADMM-Plus since its inaugural meeting in 2010. Japan has taken an active role in the ADMM-Plus in fostering practical cooperation in the areas of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), maritime security, military medicine, counterterrorism, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action, and more recently, cyber security.

13. ASEAN-Japan cooperation on counter terrorism and transnational crimes is facilitated under the ambit of the ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC+Japan), which was first held in 2013 and the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) + Japan Consultation, which was established in 2004. The SOMTC+Japan Consultation serves as a venue for ASEAN and Japan to exchange views on transnational crime issues in the region, particularly in areas of mutual concern. ASEAN and Japan adopted ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime’ at the 17th ASEAN-Japan Summit on 12 November 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. To implement the Declaration, both sides adopted the SOMTC + Japan Work Plan for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2015-2017) in 2015 and subsequently the SOMTC – Japan Work Plan for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2018-2022) in 2018. Under the auspices of the SOMTC+Japan Consultation, two Dialogues were established, namely the ASEAN-Japan Counter-Terrorism (AJCT) Dialogue, established in 2006, and the ASEAN-Japan Cybercrime (AJCC) Dialogue, established in 2013. The convening of these Dialogues are mainly funded by the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). Japan also cooperates with ASEAN on drug control through ASEAN Plus Japan Senior Officials Meetings on Drug Matters (ASOD+Japan) since 2012 and the ASOD Plus Three coordination meeting held annually.

Economic Cooperation

14. Japan remains a key trade and investment partner to ASEAN. Trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 226.0 billion in 2019 and placing Japan as ASEAN's fourth largest trading partner. Japan was ASEAN's second largest external source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2019 with FDI flows from Japan to ASEAN amounted to USD 20.4 billion, accounting for 12.7 per cent of total FDI flows to ASEAN.¹

15. The ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement was signed on 14 April 2008 and entered into force on 1 December 2008. ASEAN and Japan completed the negotiation on the AJCEP Trade in Services, Movement of Natural Persons (MNP), and Investment chapters in 2016. The First Protocol to Amend the AJCEP Agreement to incorporate the Chapters on Trade in Services, Investment Chapter, and Movement of Natural Persons was signed by 9 ASEAN Member States at the sideline of the 7th RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 2 March 2019, by Japan on 27 February 2019 in Tokyo, and by Vietnam on 24 April 2019.

16. The ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap was endorsed at the 18th ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) – Minister for Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) of Japan (AEM-METI) Consultations on 30 August 2012 in Siem Riep, Cambodia, to promote strategic partnerships in the areas of improvement of business environment, trade and investment facilitation and liberalization, infrastructure development, connectivity, human resources development and enhancement and coordination on domestic policies and regulations, among others. At the 20th AEM-METI Consultations in August 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, the Ministers endorsed the improvements of the Roadmap, which include the expansion of cooperation in the areas of mutual interest, such as development of SMEs and cooperatives, economic legal framework, science and technology, healthcare, logistics and transportation, information and communication technologies, education and human resources development, and tourism. At the 22nd AEM-METI Consultations on 6 August 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, the Ministers endorsed the renewed Roadmap to take into account of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and AEC Blueprint 2025. At the 24th AEM-METI Consultations in August 2018, the Minister welcomed ASEAN-Japan Fourth Industrial Revolution Initiatives.

17. The AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC) was established in 1998 to promote the revival of economy and industry in ASEAN by establishing appropriate mechanisms to exchange views and information concerning issues relating to ASEAN-Japan development cooperation within the existing AEM-METI Consultations. AMEICC has working groups in human resources development, West-East corridor development, automobile industry, chemical industry, consumer electronic industry, textile and garment industry, and statistics. AMEICC also actively participates at the Joint Consultation between ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME) (formerly SME Working Group) and SME Agency of Japan, which is held back-to-back with ACCMSME Meeting.

18. ASEAN and Japan organised the ASEAN Economic Ministers Roadshow (AEM Roadshow) to Japan on 25-28 April 2012 and on 6-9 April 2017. During the second AEM Roadshow in April 2017, the ASEAN-Japan Innovation Network (AJIN), a private-

¹ ASEAN preliminary data for 2019

sector led initiative, was launched with the signing of Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) between Japan and ASEAN business representatives. AJIN aims to promote innovation and creation of new industries through collaboration and cooperation between ASEAN-Japan businesses.

19. The Special AEM-METI on COVID-19 Response held on 29 July 2020 via videoconference adopted the ASEAN-Japan Economic Resilience Action Plan. The Action Plan contained the concrete activities to realise the three objectives in the ASEAN-Japan Initiatives on Economic Resilience in Response to the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak, namely: (i) sustaining the close economic ties developed by ASEAN and Japan; (ii) mitigating the adverse impact of COVID-19 on the economy; and (iii) strengthening economic resilience.

20. ASEAN-Japan's energy cooperation is pursued under the purview of ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME) – METI Consultations for ASEAN-Japan Energy Cooperation (SOME-METI Consultations).

21. ASEAN-Japan's cooperation on transport is facilitated by ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers' Meeting (ATM+Japan) since 2003. ASEAN and Japan have been negotiating the ASEAN-Japan Regional Air Services Agreement (AJ-ASA) since 2004 with a view to enhancing the air transport relationship between Japan and each ASEAN Member States.

22. On ICT's cooperation, Japan has assisted ASEAN under the framework of ASEAN and Japan Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting (TELMIN+Japan) and through supporting the implementation of the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2020 (AIM2020). At the 19th ASEAN TELMIN on 25 October 2019 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, the Ministers agreed to rename the ASEAN ICT ministerial meeting to the ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN) to reflect the role of ICT as an enabler of digital transformation. The 1st ADGMIN+Japan was held on 22 January 2021 via videoconference, endorsed the 2021 ASEAN-Japan ICT Work Plan which contributes to the achievement of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 (ADM2025).

23. To support the promotion of trade, investment and tourism, the ASEAN-Japan Centre was established in May 1981 in Tokyo, Japan by concluding the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism. The Centre plays a pivotal role in promoting exports, investment and tourism between Japan and ASEAN Member States.

Socio-Cultural Cooperation

24. ASEAN and Japan place emphasis on people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges, particularly among the youth and intellectuals, with a view to fostering a sense of togetherness, mutual respect and understanding of each other's traditions and values. One of the key programme initiated by the Government of Japan to provide good foundation for strong solidarity within Asia through large-scale youth exchanges involving ASEAN, Japan and beyond is The Japan East-Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS). JENESYS was first implemented as a five-year programme from 2007-2012 (with approximately 13,500 people invited to Japan and 700 Japanese invited to ASEAN Member States). The government of Japan continued to launch JENESYS2.0 from 2013-2015 (with approximately 10,100 people invited to

Japan and 600 Japanese invited to ASEAN Member States). Since then, JENESYS is renewed annually as a recurring project under the following project names: JENESYS2015 (involved approximately 1800 people), JENESYS2016 (involved approximately 1800 people), JENESYS2016-Economics (involved approximately 2000 people), JENESYS2017 (involved approximately 1600 people), JENESYS2018 (involved approximately 1600 people), JENESYS2019 (involved approximately 1100 people), JENESYS2020 (involved approximately 1100 people) and JENESYS2021 (aiming to involve 900 people).

25. In the area of health cooperation, under the “Japan-ASEAN Health Initiative”, various programmes, including ASEAN Japan Health Exchange Programme, have been implemented to promote healthy lifestyles, preventing diseases and raising healthcare standards. Japan has also initiated Asia Health and Well-being Initiative to support Asian countries, including some ASEAN Member States to create vibrant and healthy societies in the region. The ASEAN-Japan Health Ministers Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Population Ageing on 15 July 2017 in Tokyo, Japan agreed to develop the ASEAN-Japan UHC Initiative, focusing on Population Ageing to achieve sustainable UHC in ASEAN and Japan by 2030 in line with existing initiatives, including the ASEAN Plus Three UHC Network and any other relevant initiatives.

26. On disaster health management cooperation, Japan has been supporting ASEAN in capacity strengthening and networking on Disaster Health Management as part of the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda through the project on Strengthening ASEAN Regional Capacity on Disaster Health Management (ARCH Project) from July 2016 to July 2019, which aims to strengthen coordination on disaster health management for rapid and effective response to disasters that occur in the ASEAN region by utilizing regional resources.

27. Japan has been working with ASEAN in addressing Coronavirus Diseases 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic through ASEAN-led platforms and mechanisms including in the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) framework. Japan pledged to contribute USD 50 million to the “ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases”.

28. The cooperation on environmental issues between ASEAN and Japan continues to grow. The ASEAN-Japan Environment Cooperation Initiative has been initiated by Japan to advance environmental cooperation in areas including climate change, water management, biodiversity conservation, chemical pollution management, wastewater management, and quality environmental infrastructure development for sustainable cities, as well as cooperation in Sustainable Development Goals. Under the framework of the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Environmental Cooperation (AJDEC), a number of initiatives/activities on environment have been implemented.

29. On science and technology, cooperation between ASEAN and Japan is undertaken through the ASEAN-Japan Cooperation Committee on Science and Technology (AJCCST).

30. On ASEAN-Japan’s culture cooperation, “WA Project” was launched at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in December 2013 to contribute to creating and enlarging circles of harmony and peace across Asia towards the future. In pursuit

of the project, the Asia Center was established in 2014 by the Japan Foundation to implement a wide range of activities to promote and strengthen two-way cultural exchanges between Japan and Asian countries.

31. On disaster management, Japan and ASEAN continue cooperation on the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2016-2020. Japan provides assistance and financial support to the AHA Centre's programmes, including, among others; i) the AHA Centre Executive Programme (ACE Programme); ii) Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA); and iii) Establishment of an Integrated Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to Strengthen the Operation of AHA Centre. ASEAN and Japan have agreed to establish the ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM Plus Japan) in 2021.

32. ASEAN and Japan continue to deepen cooperation in sports. The inaugural ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Sports (1st AMMS+Japan) held on 11 October 2017 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar adopted the Vision, Policy Guidelines and Strategic Directions of the AMMS+Japan Cooperation. Built upon the results of the ASEAN-Japan Collaborative Work Programme on Sports Needs Assessment conducted by the Japan Sports Agency (JSA) and the ASEAN Secretariat from June until October 2018, the First ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Sports (1st SOMS+Japan) further considered and endorsed Pillar 1: The Development of Physical Education (PE) Teachers and Coaches and Pilar 2: Women in Sports as the priorities to be furthered through the ASEAN-Japan Cooperation on Sports framework. These decisions have led to the ongoing development of the ASEAN-Japan Actions on Sports project. The Sport for Tomorrow programme spearheaded by the Government of Japan aims to promote sport to more than 10 million people in over 100 nations until 2020. It also contributes to the realization of the policy priority targets in the Work Plan of the AMMS+Japan Cooperation.

Connectivity and Narrowing Development Gap

33. On connectivity, ASEAN and Japan have set up a regular meeting between ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the Japanese Task Force on Connectivity since 2011. In May 2015, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure: Investment for Asia's Future" initiative to contribute to financing quality infrastructure in Asia and enhancing regional connectivity. In May 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the "Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure" initiative to contribute to promoting quality infrastructure investment in Asia and enhancing regional connectivity, with a view to support the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. At the 22nd ASEAN-Japan Summit on 4 November 2019 in Bangkok, ASEAN and Japan adopted the Joint Statement on Connectivity to further strengthen ASEAN-Japan cooperation in regional connectivity.

34. On ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN), Japan has participated in the Second and Third ASCN Annual Meeting in 2019 and 2020. In addition, Japan hosted two ASEAN-Japan Smart Cities Network High Level Meetings in October 2019 and December 2020. ASEAN and Japan continues to cooperate on the implementation of the cities Smart City Action Plans (SCAPs) through the Japan Association for Smart

Cities in ASEAN (JASCA) and Smart City supported by Japan ASEAN Mutual Partnership (Smart JAMP).

35. Japan has contributed to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) since the implementation of the IAI Work Plan I. Under the IAI Work Plan I, Japan supported a total of 47 projects amounting to USD 6.4 million and JPY 87.5 million. Among the 47 projects, 28 of the projects were jointly funded with ASEAN-6 countries. The projects supported by Japan spanned across a range of sectors, including transport, energy, public sector capacity building, labour and employment, higher education, ICT, trade in goods and services, customs, investment, tourism, and environment. Under the IAI Work Plan II, Japan supported a total of 87 projects with a total reported value of USD 6.8 million. Among which, 58 of the projects were supported jointly with ASEAN-6 countries. The projects addressed concerns of the CLMV countries in the areas of agriculture, tourism, SMEs, quality assurance, investment promotion, business environment, environment, and human resource capacity building for government officials. Under the IAI Work Plan III, Japan has supported 11 projects amounting to USD 3.26 million. Under the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025), to date, Japan has supported one project amounting to USD 315,989.96. Japan supports the Attachment Programme at the ASEAN Secretariat for Junior Diplomats of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam and Attachment of Officers from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam for AEC and ASCC Involvement at the ASEAN Secretariat.

36. Japan reaffirmed its continued commitment to help narrowing the development gaps in ASEAN through various sub-regional development endeavours. The annual Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting has been held since 2009. At the 7th Mekong-Japan Summit held in July 2015 in Tokyo, Japan, the Leaders adopted the “New Tokyo Strategy 2015 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation”, an initiative to realise “quality growth” in the Mekong region, which is supported by concrete plans such as the “Mekong-Japan Action Plan for Realization of the New Tokyo Strategy 2015,” the “Japan-Mekong Connectivity Initiative,” and the “Mekong Industrial Development Vision” (MIDV) and its Work Programme. The MIDV 2.0 was adopted in 2019 and comprises of three main pillars: (i) Connectivity (Industry, Hard and Soft); (ii) Digital Innovations; and (iii) Sustainable Development Goals (inclusiveness/sustainability), particularly promoting green economy and building sustainable society. The Working Programme to implement the MIDV 2.0 was endorsed by the Ministers at the 12th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers’ Meeting held on 27 August 2020 via videoconference.

Japan’s Support to Development Cooperation

37. Japan continues to support ASEAN’s integration and community building efforts. In March 2006 the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) was established based on the pledge of the then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at the 9th ASEAN-Japan Summit held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. With the contribution of the Japanese Government JAIF support cooperation projects under ASEAN-Japan cooperation.

38. ASEAN and Japan established the JAIF Management Team (JMT) in Jakarta in 2011. The JMT helps plan, design, manage, implement and oversee the programming of JAIF-funded programmes/projects.

39. ASEAN and Japan signed the ASEAN-Japan Technical Cooperation Agreement (TCA) on 13 May 2019 in Tokyo to create a legal framework for JICA to provide assistance to ASEAN as an international organization. The TCA is under implementation.

