

## **Overview of ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**

### **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 and appointed a Jakarta-based Ambassador to ASEAN in July 2010. 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 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit in October 2009.
5. At the 14<sup>th</sup> 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 40<sup>th</sup> 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 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2018. At the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit in November 2018 in Singapore, the Leaders adopted a Joint Statement on Commemoration of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation reaffirming the commitment to further strengthen the partnership.
8. At the 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.
9. ASEAN and Japan commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2023. At the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit on 6 September 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia, ASEAN and Japan adopted a Joint Statement

on the Establishment of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP).

10. At the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in December 2023 in Tokyo, the Leaders adopted a Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation “Trusted Partners” and its Implementation Plan to set direction for ASEAN-Japan CSP in the coming years.

### **Political and Security Cooperation**

11. 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).

12. 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.

13. 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. 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.

14. 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. ASEAN and Japan adopted ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime’ at the 17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit on 12 November 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The SOMTC + Japan Work Plan for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime was adopted by both sides in 2015, 2018, and 2023 to implement the Joint Declaration. 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. Japan also cooperates with ASEAN on drug control through ASEAN Plus Japan Senior Officials Meetings on Drug Matters (ASOD + Japan) since 2012.

15. ASEAN and Japan cooperation in the field of law and justice was further strengthen following the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers, the ASEAN-G7 Justice Minister’s Interface, and the ASEAN-Japan Special Youth Forum for Promoting the Rule of Law on 5-7 July 2023. Both sides are committed to elevating ASEAN-Japan cooperation in the field of law and justice through the implementation of the Joint Statement and ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Law and Justice.

## Economic Cooperation

16. According to preliminary data from ASEAN statistics, total two-way trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 241.1 billion in 2023, accounting for 6.8 per cent of ASEAN's total merchandise trade.<sup>1</sup> Total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from Japan into ASEAN were valued at USD 14.5 billion in 2023, accounting for 6.3 per cent of total FDI inflows into ASEAN. To date, Japan is ASEAN's fourth largest trade partner and fifth largest external source of FDI among ASEAN Dialogue Partners in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

17. 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 in 2019 and entered into force on 1 February 2022 for all parties.

18. The ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap was endorsed at the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) – Minister for Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) of Japan (AEM-METI) Consultations on 30 August 2012 in Siem Riep, Cambodia. At the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 and at the 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

19. 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 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.

20. The ASEAN-Japan Innovation Network (AJIN), a private-sector led initiative, was launched at the ASEAN Economic Ministers Roadshow (AEM Roadshow) to Japan on 6-9 April 2017 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.

21. 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).

22. ASEAN-Japan's cooperation on transport is facilitated by ASEAN and Japan Transport Ministers' Meeting (ATM+Japan) since 2003. ASEAN and Japan have been

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary ASEAN data for 2023

<sup>2</sup> ASEAN data for 2022

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.

23. On ICT's cooperation, Japan has assisted ASEAN under the framework of ASEAN and Japan Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting (TELMIN+Japan). At the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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).

24. To support the promotion of trade, investment and tourism, the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) 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**

25. 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).

26. 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.

27. On disaster management cooperation, Japan continues its support in the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Disaster Management, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025 and its Mid-Term Review, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 as well as the operationalization of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre).

28. Japan has been working with ASEAN in addressing COVID-19 pandemic through ASEAN-led platforms and mechanisms including in the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) framework. Japan has supported the establishment and operation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED).

29. 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 various 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.

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

31. On ASEAN-Japan's culture cooperation, both sides continue to enhance cooperation including through the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Cooperation in Culture and the Arts 2022-2025. The "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.

32. ASEAN and Japan continue to deepen cooperation in sports through the ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Sport mechanism through the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Sports 2021-2025.

### **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 22<sup>nd</sup> 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. To further support regional connectivity, Japan announced the new "Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Connectivity Initiative" which will promote and enhance technical cooperation.

34. On ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) ASEAN and Japan continue 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) through its support to the implementation of the IAI Work Plans. 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, such as the Mekong-Japan cooperation and Initiative for ASEAN Integration to promote inclusive

and sustainable development across the region, and programmes to foster human resource development, narrow the development gap and promote subregional development among ASEAN Member States.

### **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 9<sup>th</sup> 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 organisation. The TCA is under implementation.

