

Policy Recommendations
on
“The Future of ASEAN Integration and
Japan’s Role: Japan-ASEAN Partnership
after New Joint Declaration”
to
the Governments of Japan
and ASEAN Member Countries



by
The 9th Japan-ASEAN Dialogue
co-sponsored by JFIR and ASEAN-ISIS
Tokyo, 14-15, March 2012

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**“The Future of ASEAN Integration and Japan’s Role:
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ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies
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The 2011 Bali Declaration by ASEAN and Japan recognizes the changing global and regional environments that will impact on their bilateral cooperation as well as their respective societies. The current European sovereign debt crisis that followed the global financial and economic crises of 2008/09, global warming and climate change that have increased the risks to human security from natural disasters, major power shifts across the globe and within East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region that offer both opportunities and challenges to the well-being of peoples and states, the continuing challenges posed by nuclear proliferation and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and transnational crimes, as well as sustainable and equitable development are certain to have far-reaching global, regional and domestic implications.

Recognizing these realities and the value of collaborative and collective action, the new joint declaration can serve as an important vehicle to further Japan and ASEAN strategic partnership especially to ensure East Asia’s peace and prosperity as well as ASEAN integration both as a statement of commitment to broad principles of cooperation and avenues for concrete joint action to ensure peace and prosperity for all in this region.

Responding to the need to assist in the success of Japan-ASEAN cooperation, including in the implementation of the 2011 Bali Declaration, the 9th Japan-ASEAN Dialogue is pleased to present this set of policy recommendations to the governments of Japan and the ASEAN Member Countries for their consideration.

ASEAN Economic Community and Japan's Contribution

Welcoming the decision of the ASEAN Leaders to build an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), recognizing the progress made by ASEAN in implementing the AEC Blueprint, acknowledging the remaining tasks towards the full realization of the AEC, and the significant contribution Japan can make towards the realization of the AEC, the 9th Japan-ASEAN Dialogue makes the following set of policy recommendations:

1. ASEAN should accelerate intra- and extra-ASEAN trade, investment and financial flows through further reduction of non-tariff barriers particularly in service, trade, and foreign direct investments; its further extension to the movement of skilled and professional manpower and businessmen within ASEAN and between ASEAN and Japan that can be facilitated by the implementation of MRAs among them.
2. ASEAN governments should more effectively deal with poverty reduction, income inequality and environmental degradation in order to ensure sustainable and equitable development in their societies through various/appropriate policy measures.
3. Japan should further liberalize its imports of agricultural products while promoting agricultural restructuring based on comparative advantages and the provision of support to its farmers adversely affected.
4. Japan should expand its technical and financial assistance to ASEAN economic integration and for reinforcing national-cum-regional standards for food, drug and industrial safety, improving youth education, health and social services, and expanding people-to-people and cultural exchanges.
5. To help narrow the development gap within ASEAN, Japan should provide more technical and financial support to ASEAN late-comer countries in the fields of trade, SME development, agricultural modernization, food security, climate change, environmental protection and human resource development.
6. Japan should increase its effective disaster prevention and post-disaster relief programmes in ASEAN in the light of their common location in the 'Ring of Fire' as seen in the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake/Tsunami and the series of natural disasters suffered by ASEAN countries in recent years.
7. Based on the 2011 Bali Declaration, Japan should accelerate its assistance to ASEAN countries in infrastructure and connectivity development, technology upgrading and capacity enhancement in all the pillars of sustainability such as economic, social, environmental, and cultural.

8. Japan and ASEAN should extend to their national policies on trade, investment and other cross-border measures the conduct of peer review of macro-economic policy measures that are done under the Chiang Mai Initiative of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) countries in order to accelerate closer economic integration between Japan and ASEAN.
9. Ahead of the realization of the AEC, Japan and ASEAN should coordinate their policies on pressing global issues such as climate change, biodiversity, food and energy security, water and natural resources conservation for presentation to regional bodies such as the APT, EAS, APEC, UNESCAP, and wider groupings to which they both belong such as ASEM and the international community.

East Asia Security and Japan-ASEAN Cooperation

Having worked as Dialogue Partners in constructive cooperation activities since 1973, having shared the view of comprehensive security and optimized the opportunities that opened up at various historical junctures to promote regional peace and prosperity in East Asia, recognizing the various complex factors shaping East Asia security at present, and guided by the 2011 Bali Declaration, the 9th Japan-ASEAN Dialogue is pleased to make the following set of policy recommendations for the consideration of the governments of Japan and the ASEAN Member Countries:

10. ASEAN and Japan should improve their cooperation within the APT, ARF, ADMM Plus and its Experts Working Groups (EWGs) by ensuring to put in the agenda of these bodies cross-cutting issues such as natural disaster risk reduction.
11. ASEAN and Japan should enhance existing framework for maritime-related cooperation between them and also consider reframing maritime security to include both traditional (such as piracy and anti-terrorism) as well as maritime-related risks to the security of their peoples such as illegal fishing, over-fishing, other crimes at sea, and marine pollution.
12. ASEAN Member Countries should consider restructuring their maritime security forces such as the establishment of civilian coast guard in order to enable them to enhance cooperation with Japan (which can extend such technical assistance as coast guard training) for ensuring East Asia security.
13. ASEAN and Japan should contribute to the upholding of freedom and safety of navigation and peaceful settlement of disputes including in areas that form part of the sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) in the East Asian region.

14. ASEAN and Japan should continue their constructive engagement with external powers including the U.S. and China to promote mutual understanding as responsible stakeholders in East Asian security cooperation.

Entangled Regional Architecture and ASEAN Community

Acknowledging that East Asia's regional architecture consisting of political, economic, functional, and other mechanisms and bodies is more 'overlapping' rather than 'entangled', that the concentric circles of cooperation mechanisms have been useful in building the regional architecture, and that ASEAN has enabled its growth and development over time, recognizing that ASEAN integration is necessary to sustain its crucial role in the further development of the regional architecture and that Japan fully supports the leading role ASEAN plays in this regard, the 9th Japan-ASEAN Dialogue makes the following set of policy recommendations:

15. ASEAN should use the concentric circles in the regional architecture for internal community-building and forging strong external relationships to facilitate the process of building an Asia-Pacific regional architecture.
16. ASEAN should do more to acknowledge Japan's contribution to the economic and social development of the ASEAN region that was achieved through the use of Japan's soft power.
17. ASEAN should ensure its leading role in the process of building a regional architecture by implementing the blueprints for the three pillars of the ASEAN Community: AEC, APSC, and ASCC using creative and innovative approaches and methods.
18. Japan and ASEAN should jointly help clarify the goals, objectives, and scope of the concentric circles in the regional architecture towards making the Asia-Pacific a vibrant global growth center and also work closely in order to play an influential role in dealing with key global issues such as the global financial architecture and environmental protection to benefit the region.
19. Japan should enhance its assistance to ASEAN to ensure the achievement of the ASEAN community of three pillars through various programmes such as the Mekong River Development Initiative as well as the streamlining of Japanese developmental and aid agencies operating in ASEAN countries towards more strategic collaboration between Japan and ASEAN countries.

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17-12-803, Akasaka 2-chome, Minato-ku,
Tokyo, 107-0052, Japan

[Tel] +81-3-3584-2190 [E-mail] jfir@jfir.or.jp

[Fax] +81-3-3589-5120 [URL] <http://www.jfir.or.jp/>