

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

PRESIDENTIAL NEWS DESK

INTERVENTION OF

PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.

**FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF ASEAN-JAPAN COMMEMORATIVE
SUMMIT**

[Delivered at the Hotel Okura, Tokyo | 17 December 2023]

Thank you, Mr.Chair, Your Majesty, Excellency,

Japan has been a consistent and reliable innovation and technological leader at the forefront of co-creating our economies and societies, as we respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century and raise the standard of living of our citizens and of our communities.

Japan is one of ASEAN's most important Comprehensive Strategic Dialogue partners.

The ASEAN-Japan relationship has inexorably evolved and progressed over the past five decades, particularly in shared commitment towards peace and security, trade and investment, food security, climate action, energy security, supply chain resilience, infrastructure development, and connectivity.

It is imperative for ASEAN and its partners, including Japan, to create a modern, comprehensive, high-quality, and mutually beneficial economic partnership.

Through the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, which entered into force in the Philippines on 2nd of June of this year, we will usher in closer trade and investment links between and among Japan and fourteen signatory countries. While Japan is the 4th largest trading partner and 4th largest source of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) of ASEAN, I am confident that this partnership will continue to grow and expand with the AJCEP Agreement and RCEP in place.

Furthermore, with the recent addition of the “*ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation Vision*” that recommends the future direction of ASEAN-Japan cooperation, we anticipate an even more vigorous economic relation.

The Philippines is particularly pleased that the vision includes pillars that aim to achieve sustainability while striking a balance between diversity and inclusiveness as well as building an ecosystem for co-creating human capital.

We are keen to collaborate with Japan to bring about the initiatives set out in the *Future Design and Action Plan for Innovative and Sustainable ASEAN-Japan Economic Co-Creation of 2023 – 2033*. Our young, dynamic, and skilled people are certain to play a vital role in shaping this vision in the path towards the Industry 4.0 Economy.

As one of the countries most vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, the Philippines realizes that agriculture is intrinsically linked with climate.

Inasmuch as food security is one of my administration’s top priorities, I encourage new agricultural technologies and the crafting of a climate change-resilient, sustainable, inclusive, and people-centered *ASEAN-Japan Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap* beyond 2025 for the next 10 years.

Sustainable energy security is a twin priority of clean energy to realize a low-carbon region and address climate change. The Philippines encourages ASEAN Member States and Japan to undertake novel joint ventures to reduce carbon emissions, promote renewable energy, and enhance environmental sustainability.

At the recently concluded 28th Session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC in Dubai or COP 28, the Parties approved the creation of a *Loss and Damage Fund*. In this connection, the Philippines would like to indicate our interest to host the Headquarters of the Board of that Fund.

We welcome new cooperation initiatives with Japan that facilitate the development of robust supply chain strategies against future disruptions and shocks in ASEAN, through diversification, digitalization, and risk management.

As the world becomes more interconnected, ASEAN must develop its physical connectivity and digital infrastructure as foundations for sustainable and inclusive economic growth, economic integration, competitiveness, and resilience.

ASEAN and Japan must also expand digital literacy to foster innovation and inclusivity and facilitate the digital transformation of our economies. That has erased the so-called digital gap.

We would appreciate, in this regard, the continued exchange of technological know-how and best practices between ASEAN Member States and Japan and investment in human capital and upskilling through various scholarship programs for ASEAN Member States.

As the permanent country coordinator for ASEAN-Japan Economic Relations, the Philippines will continue to shepherd ASEAN initiatives and projects with Japan not only to co-create a region of economic prosperity but also an inclusive society that is ready for the future.

Thank you.

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