

The 48th Policy Plenary Meeting on “After the closing of ASEAN Plus Three and East Asia Summit”

December 19, 2011

The 48th Policy Plenary Meeting of the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC) was held on December 19 at the conference room of the Japan Forum on International Relations, to discuss "After the closing of ASEAN Plus Three and East Asia Summit." Mr. ISHIKANE Kimihiro, Deputy Director-General of Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, made keynote report, which was followed by an active exchange of views among Members of CEAC. Mr. ISHIKANE stated as follows:

In pursuit of order formation in Asia aligned with its national interest, Japan for more than a year has been arranging with nations concerned to establish the "East Asia Summit" (EAS) chiefly as a place to strengthen political and security ties and confirm fundamental rules of the region. At the latest EAS, we have reached out in advance to the United States, Australia, Chairman Indonesia and other ASEAN countries as well as the EAS members, took up maritime security as a topic, and coordinated it into the "EAS Declaration" and "Chairman's Statement." There, emphasis is placed on international law compliance. When something of concern exists within the region, it is necessary to let the region be "engaged" in line with international law, while "deterrence" also needs to be in place. Especially from the engagement point, we may need to expand the existing ASEAN Marine Forum and transform it into a framework that enables free exchange of views with participation of Japan, United States, China and Australia. In the meantime, Japan will continue to support "ASEAN Centrality" of this region.

Amidst changing regional situations, how to maintain Japan's presence in ASEAN has been one of our tasks. At the latest "Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting," the announcement of joint declaration known as Bali Declaration was achieved. With supporting connectivity as its core, task force was set up on both Japan and ASEAN side last year, and after talks Japan decided to carry out 33 projects to support connectivity. This is expected to be a 2 trillion yen business to be undertaken as an All Japan project by public

and private sectors. There were also other decisions made from anti-disaster perspective, such as support to AHA Center and designing future "ASEAN Disaster Prevention Network." The nonproliferation and environmental issues also consist the cores of cooperation.

At "ASEAN Plus Three" Summits, we have accumulated practical cooperation, which have borne fruits such as "Chiang Mai Initiative" as an emergency measure against currency crisis, or establishment of monitoring body "AMRO" to watch for economic crisis in advance. "APTERR" to handle food crisis in the region was also established. Also in respect to economic integration, workshops are to be launched to design the frameworks of "EAFTA" (ASEAN Plus Three) and "CEPEA" (ASEAN Plus Six). Through these workshops, we need to speed up investigations on economic integration.

Since the Mekong-Japan Summit held in 2009 at Tokyo, Japan has strengthened its engagement in the Mekong region mainly comprised of less developed ASEAN members. Japan will continue to support building this transparent, open and inclusive regional order. In 2012, Another "Mekong-Japan Summit" is expected to be held. As for future tasks, ASEAN Chairman after the coming year shall be in the order of Cambodia, Brunei and Myanmar, and Japan needs to deepen engagement with these countries as well. Myanmar notably, needs to be engaged on various occasions to prevent its democratic move which has just began to move forward from backsliding.