

Mid-term review of “Tokyo Strategy 2012 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation”

December 14, 2013

[Japanese](#)



The Heads of State / Government of Japan, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand met in Tokyo on 14 December 2013 for the Fifth Mekong-Japan Summit back to back ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting.

The Leaders conducted a mid-term review of the progress to date of Mekong-Japan cooperation based on “Tokyo Strategy 2012 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation” in consideration of the results of the Sixth Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in June 2013 and the Fourth Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting in August 2013, as stated below. The Leaders acknowledged the revised ["Action Plan for the realization of the Tokyo Strategy 2012"](#).

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen cooperation toward 2015.

I Introduction

The Leaders noted with deep satisfaction that the relationship and cooperation between the Mekong region countries and Japan have been developing substantially based on the “Tokyo Strategy 2012 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation”, adopted at the Fourth Mekong-Japan Summit last year, which includes three pillars to be implemented by 2015.

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed Prime Minister Abe's visit to all the Mekong region countries this year.

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed the steadfast implementation of assistance by 600 billion JPY in ODA from the fiscal year 2013, committed by Japan at the Fourth Mekong-Japan Summit 2012.

The Leaders appreciated ongoing activities between Japan and Thailand under Mekong-Japan cooperation and welcomed the continued partnership for future activities.

The Leader of Japan proposed a revised version of “Japan’s Indicative Flagship Projects List”, which was presented by Japan at the Fourth Mekong-Japan Summit. The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed this proposal.

II Mekong-Japan cooperation

1) Enhancing Mekong Connectivity

The Leaders reaffirmed that the efforts to enhance connectivity in the Mekong region is significant for enhancing connectivity in ASEAN toward the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2015.

The Leaders of the Mekong countries recognized the progress on infrastructure and institutional connectivity development on East-West Economic Corridor and Southern Economic Corridor undertaken by the Mekong countries, and appreciated Japan's cooperation in development of these Corridors, and also expressed expectation on future assistance of Japan for these Economic Corridors.

The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of fulfilling the missing links along the main Economic Corridors. At the same time, the Leaders also recognized the necessity of multifaceted urban area development along the Economic Corridors.

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries noted the progress in customs cooperation for trade facilitation through customs modernization supported by Japan in Mekong region countries and other ASEAN countries, including the introduction of automated customs clearance systems, as a significant contribution to enhance institutional connectivity in the Mekong region.

The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of promotion of "ASEAN Smart Network Initiative" for the solution of social issues including environment issues by developing and utilizing ICT infrastructure and applications.

2) Developing Together

The Leaders welcomed the steady development of hard infrastructure and capacity building, including Japan's assistance in formulating industrial policies such as "Industrialization Strategy and Action Plan towards 2020" of Viet Nam, based upon the Mekong Development Roadmap adopted at the 4th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting under the Mekong-Japan Economic and Industrial Cooperation Initiative (MJ-CI). The Leaders also noted the importance of formulating a medium- and long-term industry development vision of the Mekong region countries for enhancing region wide value chain network which was proposed at the Sixth Mekong-Japan Industry and Government Dialogue, and instructed Economic Ministers to draw up such a vision.

a. Improving Investment Environment in the Mekong region

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed the increase of investment from Japan to the region from last year. The Leaders welcomed that the rule negotiation on the Investment and Services Chapter of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement reached substantial agreement and the legal framework for high-level liberalization and protection of the investment would be developed between all the Mekong region countries and Japan, by the conclusion of the bilateral investment treaty between Japan and Myanmar.

The Leaders shared the view that Japan and the Mekong region countries make efforts to improve investment environment for further promoting investment to the Mekong region

countries through the Joint Committee based on the existing the Economic Partnership Agreements and investment agreements.

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries expressed their appreciation to the steady progress of cooperation through Japan's related agencies Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) and The Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association (HIDA). The Leaders welcomed the decision on the opening of the JETRO office in Vientiane, Lao PDR in 2014.

b. Actions and measures to engage Mekong region countries in the global market economy
The Leaders welcomed accession of Lao PDR to WTO in February 2013, and expressed their determination to work to maintain and strengthen the multilateral trading system.

c. Actions and measures to strengthen support for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam (CLMV) development and the CLV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam) Development Triangle Area
The Leader of Japan announced that Japan will continue to support CLMV development and the CLV Development Triangle Area, and the Leaders of Mekong region countries welcomed the announcement.

d. Actions and measures to promote cultural exchange and tourism
The Leaders welcomed Japan's announcement that it would strengthen cultural exchanges in Asia through promoting two-way exchanges and cooperation in the field of arts culture and sports, as well as Japanese language learning assistance, in order to realize a future where Japan and other Asian countries learn from each other.

The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed the increase of tourists between Japan and the Mekong region countries. The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed that Japan decided to relax visa requirements for all of the Mekong countries this year. The Leaders decided to make further efforts for the promotion of people-to-people exchanges.

The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of boosting the development of the legal framework, such as bilateral and multilateral air services agreements for further promotion of people-to-people exchanges.

The Leaders welcomed active youth exchanges between Japan and the Mekong region countries through various exchange programs, such as JENESYS2.0. (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths 2.0)

e. Actions and measures to promote public-private cooperation
The Leaders decided to promote public-private partnership projects towards resilient infrastructure development in the Mekong region.

The Leaders confirmed that they will continue to hold the Forum for the Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong Region in order to further strengthen the framework for public-private cooperation, and collaboration with Mekong-Japan Industry and Government Dialogue.

3) Ensuring Human Security and Environmental Sustainability

a. Actions and measures to contribute to the achievement of human security goals across the Mekong regional countries

The Leaders confirmed that steady progress of specific targets, provided along the MDGs, to save children's and maternal lives and to reduce the deaths related to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

The Leaders shared the view to cooperate towards the development of the post-2015 development agenda from the perspective of human security.

The Leaders welcomed the efforts of both sides and the Leaders of the Mekong region countries called for technical support of Japan to advance universal health coverage and improve health care system governance. The Leaders decided to strengthen cooperation in the field of communicable diseases, maternal and child healthcare, and preventive healthcare. The Leaders of the Mekong region countries also welcomed Japan's medical technologies and services and human resource development such as nursing to provide better health service in the region.

b. Actions and measures for environmental and climate change issues

The Leaders welcomed that, at the 2nd Green Mekong Forum co-hosted by Thailand and Japan in Bangkok in October 2013, participants from not only government agencies but also local government and the private sector shared experiences and exchanged views on areas of cooperation articulated in the "Action Plan for 'A Decade toward the Green Mekong' Initiative".

The Leader of Japan expressed his commitment that Japan, on the basis of the "Proactive Diplomatic Strategy for Countering Global Warming" announced at the 19th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Warsaw (COP19), will support developing countries in the field of climate change, taking into consideration the needs in the future. The Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed Japan's announcement.

Regarding the 2nd East Asia Low Carbon Growth Partnership Dialogue in Tokyo in May 2013, the Leader of Japan appreciated the contribution to the discussions and from the Mekong region countries including Cambodia serving as co-chair.

Regarding the Joint Crediting Mechanism, the Leader of Japan welcomed that such mechanism was already established with Vietnam and Lao PDR respectively, and announced Japan's intention to continue to promote this effort in the Mekong region.

The Leaders reaffirmed the vital importance of sustainable management and development of water and related resources of the Mekong River and continue to cooperate with local and international organizations, in particular the Mekong River Commission (MRC) in this regard. To this end, the MRC was encouraged to expedite the studies on sustainable management and development of the Mekong River, including impacts by mainstream hydropower projects.

The Leaders reaffirmed the continued cooperation in the utilizing of ICT for environmental issues and disaster risk reduction.

c. Actions and measures for disaster management cooperation

The Leaders welcomed the progress of disaster risk reduction cooperation between Japan and ASEAN and Japan's support for floodwater, typhoon and cyclone damage in the Mekong region, and, bearing in mind recent disasters in the Philippines, shared the view that Japan and Mekong region countries will promote cooperation for disaster risk reduction including strengthening ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center) and disaster prevention agencies in each country.

The Leaders reached consensus to work together towards the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015 and the preceding regional meeting – the Sixth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) to be held in Bangkok in June 2014.

d. Action and implementation regarding food security

The Leaders welcomed the steady implementation of institutional development of ASEAN + 3 Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and confirmed that APTERR played important role in the occasion of disaster relief in Lao PDR and Philippines.

III Assistance for Myanmar's efforts

The Leaders reiterated their commitment to support Myanmar's ongoing efforts to address various issues, including democratization, enhancement of the rule of law, economic reform, national reconciliation and development cooperation. The Leaders of the Mekong region countries appreciated Japan's support for Myanmar's efforts by combining the public and private sectors' strengths.

In this regard, the Leaders of the Mekong region countries welcomed Japan's announcement of the implementation of 91 billion JPY in ODA for Myanmar by the end of fiscal year 2013.

The Leaders expressed confidence and support to Myanmar's leadership as the chair of ASEAN in 2014.

IV Mekong Japan cooperation in 2014

The Leaders confirmed that the Sixth Mekong-Japan Summit will be held on the occasion of the multilateral meeting in 2014 on a convenient date by the co-chairs of Myanmar and Japan.