

Chapter 6

**Messages from the Leaders of
Southeast Asian Countries and Japan**



1 Japan

● Message by H.E. Mr. Abe Shinzo, Prime Minister of Japan

I would like to extend my heart-felt welcome to Japan to the respective representatives of the 45th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program.

Since taking office as Prime Minister, I have visited all of your ten countries and at every destination, I received the warmest of hospitality. Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the inception of ASEAN. As partners sharing common basic principles, I have confidence in ASEAN's ability to lead the region towards stability and prosperity.

On October 9, I had the pleasure of welcoming the heads-of-state from five of your countries – Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam - to Tokyo upon hosting the Tenth Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting. On this occasion, we agreed to further enhance the exchange of people in a variety of areas.

People will pave the way towards the future, and it is especially up to you, the young generation, to carry us through. The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth

Program is symbolic of our emphasis on the cooperation amongst the people of our countries. Over 12,000 youths have participated in the program and are now active in a diverse spectrum of professions.

You are about to take part in port-of-call country programs, including homestays, and share life onboard a ship with your fellow participating youths, in which you will cross paths with many peers representing different histories, cultures and values. Take full advantage of conversing with each other, deepening your bonds as you learn about the splendors of other nations, while taking pride in your own native country.

I strongly hope that you treasure the friendships nurtured during the ship program and that this network will prove valuable in your future endeavors.

October 31, 2018
Courtesy Call
At the Office of Prime Minister

2 Brunei Darussalam

● Message by Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Aminuddin Ihsan bin Pehin Orang Kaya Saiful Mulok Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports

First and foremost, let me extend a very warm welcome to all our distinguished friends from Japan and ASEAN member states in the 45th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP) to Brunei Darussalam, the Abode of Peace. For the first time since 2014, and indeed, as the first port of call in this year's programme, it is our great honour and pride to host all of you in Brunei Darussalam and to play part in SSEAYP in this year.

SSEAYP has done much to strengthen relations as well as foster awareness and understanding of each other's culture and life. Recalling back to the words of H.E. Mr. Kato Motohiko, the Ambassador of Japan to Brunei Darussalam during the National Flag Handover Ceremony to our contingent on October 17, Your Excellency highlighted how this Programme has played a crucial part in building solid foundations of networking and communication between our youths from Japan and ASEAN. Indeed, by building new bridges between each other, SSEAYP is a golden opportunity for all participants to achieve a deeper level of appreciation for each other as one big community both onboard and when the ship berths at port. Therefore, allow me to once again express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of Japan for the generosity and continued contributions in sponsoring this valuable program across the ocean for developing and uniting our youths together.

As this is the first time many of our youths have been in Brunei Darussalam, we want all of you to have a meaningful experience and to see our beloved country closely and learn more about our culture firsthand. Therefore, as part of the itinerary, it is a great pleasure for us to create an immersive programme for all our friends, especially in showcasing our daily life, culture and history.

Indeed, as Bruneians, we remain proud to have celebrated the historic Golden Jubilee of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne in October last year. As part of its lasting legacy, the Golden Jubilee has seen the construction of new, magnificent landmarks in our country, including the Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha Bridge and the scenic Taman Mahkota Jubli Emas, which you will see

firsthand alongside historic landmarks such as Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Mosque and Kampong Ayer (Water Village) in the capital.

Amongst other activities planned in this programme, we are also excited that all our friends will have the opportunity to stay with a foster family. During this time, you will personally experience our unique way of life, our daily culture, cuisine and how family life takes a special place in Brunei Darussalam, like in many of your own countries. Overall, true to the objectives of SSEAYP, it is our intention to paint a true picture of our unique culture in Brunei Darussalam and to share its beauty with all of you.

Participants of the 45th SSEAYP, although the four day stay in Brunei Darussalam is brief, I have great faith that your experience in our country will be a memorable one and will foster relations that will last you a lifetime. I believe each and every one of you will take back great stories and experiences to share with your families and friends at home that you will always cherish. As you leave Brunei Darussalam to sail the next port of destination, this is also the opportunity to create lasting friendship and meaningful networking, as well as to learn as much as possible from one another as one community.

Before concluding, once again I would like to thank Your Excellency and the Government of Japan for the continuous support to this programme. I would also like to wish all the delegates and participants on your next journey. I was informed the sea was calm on your journey and I hope that the sea will remain calm. I have no doubt that your lives will be changed for the better once you have reach home and concluded this programme. All the best to all of you and once more, have wonderful stay in Brunei Darussalam, the Abode of Peace. Please remember you have an extended family in Brunei Darussalam and will always be welcome here as tourists.

Thank you.

November 10, 2018
Welcome Dinner
At International Convention Centre

3 Philippines (Manila)

● Message by Ambassador Junever M. Mahilum-West, Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs

On behalf of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, Secretary Teodoro Locsin, Jr., I warmly welcome the delegates of the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP) to the Philippines.

I also wish to express my appreciation and heartfelt congratulations to the National Youth Commission for spearheading the SSEAYP in the Philippines.

SSEAYP has a proud history. Now on its 45th year of bringing together 300 talented young people who represent their countries from Southeast Asia and Japan. It is a cultural exchange program distinguished for fostering camaraderie and building relations among the youth in the region.

ASEAN seeks to address the needs of over 635 million people in over region. Our vision of an ASEAN Community is one that engages and benefits our peoples. An ASEAN Community that is sustainable, resilient, and dynamic. We aspire to be an inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, provides equitable access to opportunities for all, and promotes and protects the human rights of our peoples, particularly on our youth.

A third of the population of ASEAN, or over 213 million people, are aged 34 years old and younger. ASEAN must address the need to invest in our youth, who will inherit our world. I would not be surprised if among you, we have our future leaders and captains of industry, the shakers and shapers of your respective countries.

ASEAN is mindful of the need to invest in quality education throughout the region and to harmonize education qualifications throughout the region so as to equip our citizens for the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

ASEAN, together with its dialogue partners, are also looking at ways to increase the mobility of students – with scholarships that would allow the youth of ASEAN to study abroad, with exchanges for teachers and trainers towards capacity-building, e-learning, among others.

My generation received the news through television or newspapers. We listened to music through radio and cassette tapes in walkmans. We would book vacations through a travel agent whom you contacted on a landline telephone.

Your generation has been raised in this highly-connected and high-tech world. Hearing the news,

booking trips and paying bills are all done with a push of a button. Tablets take the place of textbooks. Certainly, the convenience that living in a high-tech world affords us has been tremendous, saving us so much time. We are attached to gadgets and other innovations that allow us to shorten processes that used to take days, even weeks to accomplish. The significance of these developments serve as background to the theme of Singapore’s 2018 ASEAN Chairmanship: Resilience and Innovation, the highlight of which is the recently held 33rd ASEAN Leaders Summit from which I only arrived from yesterday.

As future leaders of your own countries, and perhaps, of this region, experiences like SSEAYAP become an important tool in focusing on people-to-people relations amidst the rapid technological breakthroughs that are taking place in the world. In cooperation with Japan, one of ASEAN’s stalwart Dialogue Partners, this program provides you with opportunities to engage with regional brothers and sisters, and to foster deeper understanding of each other’s points of view through culture.

It is my desire that, as each of you makes your way into this world to carve out your individual paths in life, you will keep in mind the memories and experiences from SSEAYP that allowed you to expand your horizons and get to know and understand your neighbors, and beyond. And when you are in that position to craft and flesh out policies and legislation, as I am sure some of you will do, I hope that you bear in mind our people, the people in ASEAN, as well as the rest of the region, in your policies, reforms, and actions. Work becomes more meaningful when we put a face to the issues that we address.

A world leader said long ago “We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.” This is what we are hoping to do for you, the ASEAN youth. We assure you that this generation is working together to leave you a world that puts a premium on values enshrined in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Vision 2025. A world of peace, equity and stability.

I thank our Dialogue Partner Japan, the National Youth Commission, and you, our participants, for fostering goodwill among our nations, and essentially acting as ambassadors for your respective countries.

Congratulations to the National Leaders and

Participating Youth of SSEAYP! As you represent your county in the course of the program, may SSEAYP spark an ever-burning desire to build bridges of friendship from which true understanding may bloom.

November 17, 2018
Welcome Ceremony and Dinner
At Makati Shangri-La Hotel

4 Philippines (Davao)

● Message by Ms. Sara Z. Duterte-Carpio, Mayor of Davao City

Good afternoon, everyone! On behalf of the City Government of Davao, I would like to welcome to Davao City all our youth delegates and government leaders from various countries in Southeast Asia and from Japan who are here for this 45th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program. We are honored that you have chosen Davao City among the stops for 45th SSEAYP, and I hope that your stay here will be productive and enjoyable.

It was Philippine National Hero Jose Rizal who said that the youth is the hope of the Fatherland. This adage is true and transcends cultures, communities and countries; for indeed, it is our young people that we pin our hopes for a brighter future for our respective nations. To all our youth delegates here, in your most capable hands lie the future of your countries, and we believe that you have the drive, the passion, the compassion and the integrity to lead your respective communities to greater heights in the years to come, just as how our SSEAYP Davao Alumni today are among our leaders here in Davao City in the fields of

governance, medicine, international relations and other fields.

May this 45th SSEAYP therefore be an opportunity for all of you to learn not only from the countries you will be visiting but also from one another, so that you will be able to unlock your leadership potentials and harness the same to lead and serve your respective communities not just in the future but as early as today.

Allow me to thank the National Youth Commission and the able men aboard the MS Nippon Maru for your roles in this initiative and for bringing our delegates safely to their destinations.

Thank you and once again, welcome to Davao City!

November 18, 2018
Welcome Lunch
At Marco Polo Hotel
(Read by Ms. Maria Clara Belen Sunga Acosta,
Councilor of Davao City)

5 Thailand

● Message by General Anantaporn Kanjanarat, Minister of Social Development and Human Security

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the people of Thailand, I wish to welcome the Administrator, National Leaders and all participating youths of the 45th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program here in Bangkok today.

I am pleased to learn that the program has provided a unique opportunity for young people from ASEAN countries and Japan since 1974 to gain cross-cultural experiences and learn from one another. Up until now, over 1,300 Thai youths have benefited from this program. They have experienced communal living onboard the ship “Nippon Maru” and participated in various kinds of creative activities. I am glad to see that the close bonds of friendship, mutual understanding and good team spirit, as envisaged 44 years ago when the program was inaugurated, the strength is still remained today.

I am sure that this will enable this very “Ship,” as well as its young seafarers, to sail through the wave of globalization and the tides of modern challenges successfully.

I think that the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program is needed a very good way for our youths to become more aware and familiar with the concept of ASEAN Community. To me, I believe that this Youth Ship, is some ways, resembles the ASEAN community. The 330 youths from 11 countries, who are intelligent individuals with great potential, will be onboard the same ship for nearly two months to learn from each other, work together, and share their own cultures as well as their experiences.

More importantly, they can turn their diverse backgrounds into good use and drive their collective efforts in order to overcome challenges and accomplish tasks that are a part of the program. Of course, not only this will generate a genuine and organic spirit of teamwork, but it can also create a sense of “family or community.” In turn, this will enhance the “United Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program Family” as well as the ASEAN Community building process.

For the participants, this is a “once in a lifetime” experience. I strongly encourage you to take full advantage of this special opportunity and to reap its benefits-broaden your mind and gain new perspectives, which can become

assets to you in all your future careers and endeavors. And always remember, togetherness is how we can overcome obstacles, especially in light of global problems such as economic crisis, climate changes, crimes, drugs and cultural collapse. The concept of “togetherness” is how we can build our community and move forward into a more prosperous and peaceful future.

Friends that you have met in this program can be friends for life or potential business partners.

So I encourage you to cherish your experience and preserve the network that you have created. This will be useful in the future, not just for yourself but also for your country and for the region.

In this regard, I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Government of Japan, which has funded the program since its inception.

I also count on our ASEAN friends for their continued sponsorship and participation so that the program can keep on running as the ASEAN Community develops.

Today, I am honored to welcome all of you on behalf of the Royal Thai Government. On the first day of the visit to Thailand, this is the beginning of a major activities of the program in Thailand at this convention center are courtesy call and dinner reception.

I hope that during your short stay in Thailand, you will find the traditional Thai hospitality and the joyful smiles which we greet our visitors.

Especially, homestay with foster parents will enable you to observe and stay Thai culture and their ways of living through first-hand experience.

Finally, I would like to extend to you once again, our warmest welcome and wish you a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Thailand. When the ship is ready for departure, I hope that you will tack back with your fond memory of Thailand.

Have a nice stay in Thailand and enjoy your time this evening.

November 24, 2018
Courtesy Call
At Vayupak Convention Center

● **Message by Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Luong, Permanent Vice Chairman of the National Committee on Youth of Viet Nam**

Over the past few days, the youth and people of Viet Nam, especially the youth and the people of Ho Chi Minh City, have been looking forward to welcoming young Japanese and ASEAN participants of the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program 2018 to visit Viet Nam. And today, in the very first moments of seeing one another at Cat Lai Port, I would like to warmly welcome all of you on behalf of the leaders of the National Committee on Youth of Viet Nam. Wish you have an exciting journey and meaningful time in Viet Nam.

This year 2018 is a very special year as it marks the 45th anniversary of the cooperative relationship between ASEAN and Japan, and also marks the 45th anniversary since the inception of the Program. The number 45 is a concrete evidence to prove strong development of the strategic partnership of ASEAN and Japan in general and the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program in particular. The strategic partnership has brought practical and significant benefits for youth of ASEAN member countries, and for Japan. It has contributed actively collectively towards the peacefulness and stability of the region.

Over the past years, youth cooperation programs and activities of ASEAN – Japan have fostered the friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between ASEAN and Japan. Among these activities, the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program is one of the most meaningful activities and has been welcomed by a number of young people across ASEAN members and Japan. After more than 20 years of joining this youth ship journey, the National Committee on Youth of Viet Nam has sent more than 680 Vietnamese youth delegates as youth messengers to promote the image of Viet Nam to other countries in the region, at the same time, together they act as a bridge connecting Japanese youth, ASEAN and Vietnamese young people. A number of Vietnamese youth delegates, who participated in the program in previous years, have held leadership positions both at the central and local levels.

On this occasion, we would like to thank the Government of Japan for organizing this program on behalf of the leaders of the National Committee on Youth of Viet Nam and on the young generation in Viet Nam. We also sincerely thank the governments of ASEAN countries and Japan for their active contribution and cooperation in implementing the program, for the warm welcome and sincere feelings that have been and will be for the Vietnamese youth delegation, who have been joining the Program in the recent days and days ahead.

Viet Nam is proud and well-known for being a country with peace, friendship and hospitality. During the time the ship dock in Viet Nam, young people from ASEAN and Japan will have the opportunity to interact with Vietnamese Youth, visit historical and cultural sites, and more one of the most exciting parts, to explore daily life of Vietnamese people during their homestay here. You will also have the opportunity to witness the progress and achievements of Viet Nam in the construction and defense of our Fatherland in addition to outstanding movements of Vietnamese young people in the current time. I hope you will earn good memories and the time you spend with us will be filled with discoveries, beautiful experiences. They all will help you better understand the culture, the country, the people of Viet Nam, have another family, and make close and beautiful friendship here in Viet Nam.

Finally, let me once again warmly welcome the delegates of the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program to Viet Nam. May health and happiness always with you.

Wish the 45th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program splendid success.

Thank you very much.

December 2, 2018
Welcome Ceremony
At Cat Lai Port