



**Chapter  
5**

**The 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan  
Friendship and Cooperation**

# 1 Special Invitation Program

The year 2023 marks the 50th commemorative year of ASEAN-Japan relations. ASEAN-Japan relations have made remarkable progress since 1973. To commemorate this occasion, the Cabinet Office invited the representatives of governments and SSEAYP alumni associations to Japan to express gratitude to all governments and concerned parties and to ask for further cooperation in the future.

The representatives of the governments and SSEAYP alumni associations stayed in Japan for four days from December 6 to 9 and attended the Commemorative Event for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation held at Hotel New Otani Tokyo on the afternoon of December 7. The NLs and PYs of the 47th

SSEAYP also attended the Commemorative Event, which was also attended by the ambassadors of the respective embassies of the Southeast Asian countries in Tokyo.

On December 8, the representatives of the governments and SSEAYP alumni associations attended the Second Conference of the Representatives of the Southeast Asian Countries and Japan in the morning, followed by the SSEAYP Alumni Meeting in the afternoon, which was attended by the representatives of the SSEAYP alumni associations.

The representatives of the governments and SSEAYP alumni associations who participated in the Special Invitation Program were as follows:

## (1) Representatives of Governments

Brunei Darussalam	Ms. Hajah Noor Maslina binti Haji Sulaiman (Chief of Staff (Youth), Youth and Sport Department, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports)
Cambodia	Ms. Sroy Socheath (Director General of Youth, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)
Indonesia	Mr. Khairil Adha (Assistant Deputy for Youth Partnership, Ministry Youth and Sports) Ms. Hasintya Saraswati (Special Staff to the Minister of Youth and Sports) Mr. Abdul Latif (Head of Public Relations, Information Systems, and Bureaucratic Reform Division, Secretariat of Deputy for Youth Development, Ministry of Youth and Sports)
Lao P.D.R.	Ms. Keo Oudone Sengmanivong (Permanent Secretary, Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union)
Malaysia	Mrs. Wan Azira binti Abd Aziz (Head of Unit, International Affairs Unit, Youth Development Division, Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia)
Philippines	Asec. Alexa Danielle C. Dayanghirang (SOMY Leader (ASEAN Sectoral Body), National Youth Commission)
Singapore	Ms. Hasliza Binte Ahmad (Director (Youth Engagement), National Youth Council Singapore)
Thailand	Mrs. Apinya Chompumas (Director-General, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security) Ms. Chayatada Prapasathid (Specialist Social Development Officer, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security)
Viet Nam	Mr. Nguyen Tuong Lam (Permanent Vice Chairman of National Committee on Youth of Viet Nam; Secretary of Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union)

**(2) Representatives of SSEAYP Alumni Associations**

Brunei Darussalam	Ms. Hj Rosmawatiniah PA Hj Ibrahim (President, Persatuan BERSATU) Ms. Nur Amalina binti Ali Yusri (Director of Media and Public Relation, Persatuan BERSATU)
Cambodia	Mr. Phann Sophea (Executive Vice-President, SSEAYP International Cambodia) Mr. Ros Chanmaravy (Head of Training Sub-Committee, SSEAYP International Cambodia)
Indonesia	Ms. Pia Adiprima (President, SSEAYP International Indonesia) Mr. Sylvanus Hardiyanto (Vice President I, SSEAYP International Indonesia) Mr. Brian Christian Chandraputra (Director of Media and Information, SSEAYP International Indonesia)
Lao P.D.R.	Mr. Yangpao Payeveu (President, Lao SSEAYP Alumni Association) Mr. Thathsaphone Lerthavone (Secretary, Lao SSEAYP Alumni Association)
Malaysia	Mr. Che Muhamad Nordin Ismail (President, KABESA) Ms. Suhaila Binti Osman (Vice President, KABESA)
Philippines	Dr. Melissa S. Reyes (Chair, SSEAYP International Philippines) Atty. Jeffrey Jefferson Y. Coronel (President, SSEAYP International Philippines)
Singapore	Mr. Muhammad Hafidz Zainal Abidin (President, SSEAYP International Singapore) Mr. Goh Kang Shyan Francis (Secretary General, SSEAYP International Singapore)
Thailand	Mr. Jakraphun Thanateeranon (President, Association of the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth of Thailand) Ms. Pattra Sriputtangkul (Secretary General, Association of the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth of Thailand)
Viet Nam	Mr. Tran Trung Hieu (President, Vietnam Alumni Club of Youth Friendship Exchange Programs) Ms. Le Hong Nhung (Member, Vietnam Alumni Club of Youth Friendship Exchange Programs)
Japan	Mr. NAGASUE Tatsuya (President, International Youth Exchange Organization of Japan) Ms. KOJIMA Makiko (Vice President, International Youth Exchange Organization of Japan) Ms. OKAWARA Tomoko (Advisor, International Youth Exchange Organization of Japan)
SSEAYP International Secretariat	Ms. TAJIMA Yukiko (Secretary General, SSEAYP International) Mr. Pakin Santanan (Deputy Secretary General, SSEAYP International)

### Program of the Commemorative Event

- (1) Opening
- (2) Speech by Mr. OTSUKA Yukihiro, Vice Minister for Policy Coordination of the Cabinet Office
- (3) Speech by Mrs. Apinya Chompumas, Director-General, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Royal Thai Government
- (4) Speech by YL of Japan, and AYL of the Philippines
- (5) Introduction of the representatives of the respective embassies
- (6) Gift Exchange
- (7) Toast by Ms. YUFU Wakako, Director General for International Youth Exchange, Cabinet Office
- (8) Cultural Performance (Introductions of each country; three minutes per country)
- (9) Speech by Ms. KATO Ayuko, Minister of State for Youth Affairs of the Cabinet Office

(10) Photo Session

(11) Closing



Conversation with the guests



Toast by Director General for International Youth Exchange, Cabinet Office

### Program of the Commemorative Event

#### ● Speech by the representative of the Government of Japan

Ms. KATO Ayuko, Minister of State for Youth Affairs of the Cabinet Office

On the occasion of the Commemorative Event for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the ambassadors, government representatives, Participating Youths, and many others for joining us today to celebrate this milestone together.

The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program was initiated as a joint program between the governments of Japan and ASEAN member countries based on the Joint Statements issued in 1974 between Japan and the respective ASEAN member countries. The approximately 13,000 young people who have participated in this program to date are now active in their respective fields, building on their experiences.

As this year marks the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, it is truly meaningful for the youth, who are the future leaders of Japan and ASEAN,

to meet face-to-face, exchange words, and build a relationship of trust through this program. I hope that the youth will make great contributions to the international and local communities through the experience of overcoming obstacles on their own through this program.

I myself had the opportunity to interact with students from various countries when I studied in the U.S., and the invaluable experience I gained during that time has been a great source of sustenance for me today. I am convinced that the experience of the past ten days has also been invaluable for you, as I have seen your lively cultural performances and the vibrant atmosphere in the hall, which has become one with you.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by wishing you all the best in your endeavors and for the further deepening of the friendship between Japan and ASEAN.

● **Speech by the representative of the governments of ASEAN member countries**

Mrs. Apinya Chompumas, Director-General, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Royal Thai Government

I am very pleased to participate in this Commemorative Event, and it is a great honor for me to deliver a speech today as a representative of the governments of the ASEAN Member States.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the governments of ASEAN Member States and Japan for their cooperation and friendship over the past 50 years as well as the support from the Government of Japan for being able to continue this year's program, which grants young people the opportunity to travel to Japan for the first time in four years due to the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been one of the most challenging for everyone, and I believe we have all been affected in one way or another.

Since the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have realized the significance of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which cover important areas such as poverty, education, health, environment, and partnership.

All participants in this year's SSEAYP engaged in a discussion session to identify actionable steps to achieve the SDGs. This is an admirable effort that gives hope for

a better future led by the younger generation of our region.

This year marks the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program has been instrumental in providing meaningful opportunities for the youth of ASEAN Member States and Japan. At present, this program has enabled many youths to develop themselves, their communities, and their societies, and its activities have achieved sustainability for participants to become increasingly aware of their role as global citizens. I express my sincere hope that the friendship and cooperation between the youth of ASEAN and Japan will continue to flourish, driven by the support of the governments of both ASEAN and Japan, as well as all alumni associations of all participating countries, to maintain and strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to all stakeholders who have contributed to the successful implementation of the 47th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program, and I hope that our collaboration will continue to flourish in the years to come.