

Speech by H.E. Mr. Viroth SUNDARA
Ambassador of the Lao PDR, Chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Tokyo (ACT)
at the Symposium to celebrate the 51st Anniversary of ASEAN
on 8 August 2018

- Dr. Aladdin D. Rillo, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN;
- Excellencies Ambassadors of ASEAN member countries to Japan;
- Mr. Masataka Fujita, Secretary General of ASEAN-Japan Centre;
- Special guests from ASEAN-China centre and ASEAN-Korea Centre;
- Colleagues, Distinguish Guests;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good afternoon. It is my great pleasure today to welcome all of you to the Symposium in commemoration of the 51st ASEAN Anniversary. On behalf of the ASEAN embassies in Tokyo and as the Chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Tokyo we are very pleased to collaborate closely with the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) to co-host this important event.

Last August 2017, we have witnessed and joined various celebrations and symposiums to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN in Tokyo and also in the ASEAN countries. For this year, we also hope that our symposium today is one of the good opportunities to all of us to exchange views and discuss how to foster the development of ASEAN in the future as well as the relations between the ASEAN and the dialogue partners including Japan.

Today's symposium also reflects the warm and close academic ties between ASEAN and Japan that you will learn more about ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by our keynote speakers and the panel discussion about the Challenges of ASEAN 2018 including Japanese special guests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today marks the 51st anniversary of ASEAN in which ASEAN has turned Southeast Asia in to dialogue, cooperation and solidarity with the highlight being the establishment of the ASEAN Community. The most remarkable achievement of ASEAN has been the maintenance of peace, security, and stability in Southeast Asia, which has provided favourable conditions for ASEAN Member States' respective socio-economic development as well as enhanced intra-ASEAN cooperation and ASEAN's external relations leading to the establishment of the ASEAN Community with a strong foundation to move forward.

For this year, we also look forward to the convening of the 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit to commemorate the 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in Singapore in November 2018. We welcome substantive progress made in enhancing ASEAN-Japan cooperation over the past year which includes the implementation of measures under the revised implementation Plan of the vision

Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. And Japan reaffirmed its continued support for ASEAN unity and ASEAN's central role in the regional conclusion.

While ASEAN has made significant progress, there are a lot of work to be done in term of economic field, politic and security, social and cultural areas and so on in realizing ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

On this symposium of the celebration of the 51st ASEAN anniversary, I do hope all of participants will be contributing, exchanging and sharing ideas with our special guests to make great strides on the path of building a united community, developing for peace and prosperity for ASEAN.

Finally, I would like to wish Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, good health, happiness and great success in your work and a fruitful and enriching symposium.

Thank you
Arigato ugozaimasu