

thejapan times

50 years of ASEAN

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Partnering for change, engaging world

JOSE C. LAUREL V
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

It is my sincere honor, on behalf of the Philippine chair, to greet the friends, partners and supporters of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the historic occasion of ASEAN's 50th Anniversary.

Fifty years ago, on Aug. 8, 1967, the foreign ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand declared the establishment of ASEAN as a "firm foundation for common action to promote regional cooperation in Southeast Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership and thereby contribute toward peace, progress and prosperity in the region."

Adopted amid a more tumultuous time around and within Southeast Asia, the Bangkok Declaration of 1967 represented the founding members' recognition that their region's future lay in fostering amity and cooperation. Just as importantly, the founding members recognized that a prosperous and peaceful Southeast Asia meant going beyond their ranks to create a community that brings together the other states in the region, wisely opening the association to the entry of future members.

Built from the lessons of prior attempts at forming a regional organization and born from the founding states' stronger resolve, ASEAN embodied Southeast Asian countries' determination to forsake conflict, peacefully resolve disputes and chart a common path toward winning the dividends of peace and development for their peoples. It was a bold step for a region still emerging from a long history of colonization, and for a group of nations with vastly



different political, historical and cultural backgrounds.

The five decades since that historic day saw ASEAN expand its members to include Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Cambodia, while bridging diverse histories, cultures, interests, imperatives and perspectives to become one of the world's most economically dynamic regions, one that has since enjoyed a sustained period of relative peace. The "ASEAN Way" proved key to this endeavor, by combining the strength and rigor of traditional diplomacy and legally binding instruments, with the flexibility of a consensus-based approach and informal arrangements, to safeguard and promote mutual respect, while fostering a constructive atmosphere in tune with the Asian heritage of its members.

Today, ASEAN is a fulcrum and driver of political and economic progress for its

members and far beyond its borders.

Since its founding, ASEAN has grown into a market of 600 million people, with a combined gross domestic product of \$2.57 trillion. It is home to some of the world's fastest-growing individual economies, with a large and dynamic and youthful labor force.

The establishment of the ASEAN Community, with its component Political-Security Community, Economic Community and Sociocultural Community, makes ASEAN one of the world's most open economic regions, positioning it for further growth, offers boundless opportunities for external partners.

Today, ASEAN is working to be central to the emerging regional security architecture and the promotion of dialogue. Its annual leader and ministerial meetings have given rise to summits, meetings and other initiatives and mechanisms involving major players in the region that tackle the pressing issues and agendas of our time. This is through the frameworks of the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, Korea), East Asia Summit (ASEAN plus Australia, China, India, Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Russia and the U.S.), ASEAN Plus One and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ASEAN plus 17 states).

It is a great honor for the Philippines, as a founding member, to also be chair of ASEAN in the same year the association marks its 50th anniversary.

The Philippine chair is advancing various initiatives with the association under the theme "Partnering for Change, Engaging the World," under which it is pursuing six priorities. These are a people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN, peace and stability in the region, maritime security

and cooperation, inclusive, innovation-led growth, ASEAN resiliency and ASEAN as a model of regionalism and a global player.

Briefly, the Philippine chair seeks an ASEAN Community that brings significant and positive change to the lives of the peoples of ASEAN, through initiatives such as strengthening small and medium enterprises, protecting migrant workers, advancing social protection for vulnerable sectors and securing the future through promoting environmental protection and sustainable development.

The Philippines also seeks to strengthen ASEAN's role in engaging external partners and the international community toward addressing traditional, non-traditional and transnational security threats while maintaining its centrality and independence.

As chair, the Philippines is hosting a full calendar of meetings and events for the duration of 2017 across the country. Of these, the highlights are the leader summits in April and November, as well as meetings at the level of ministers, senior officials and working groups. From Aug. 2 to 8, Manila will host the 50th ASEAN ministerial meetings and related meetings, culminating with the Grand Commemorative Celebration of ASEAN's 50th Anniversary. We cordially welcome their excellencies, the foreign ministers of ASEAN and its dialogue partners, as well as all participating officials and delegates.

2017 is also a milestone for ASEAN-Japan relations, as both sides mark the 40th anniversary of the Fukuda Doctrine that was introduced in Manila in 1977 by then Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda. Japan has been ASEAN's most reliable and supportive partner in a relationship that formally began in 1973.

Japan supports ASEAN centrality and unity, works with ASEAN to advance universal values and the rule of law, and ardently assists economic growth and development both at the level of the organization and the individual member states through a comprehensive economic partnership spanning trade, investment and services, as well as cooperation based on official development assistance and private sector foreign direct investment. Japan's people-to-people ties with ASEAN have grown significantly, specifically in reciprocal tourism, cultural and educational exchanges and other areas.

This 50th anniversary provides ASEAN and its partners, of which Japan is at the forefront, an unparalleled opportunity to take stock of the gains and lessons of the past to nurture ASEAN as an organization and as a basis for realizing a future of peace, stability and prosperity for the region and beyond.



Left top: Signing ceremony of the establishment of ASEAN in 1967; Left: Then-Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda delivers a speech in Manila in 1977, which includes what is known as the Fukuda Doctrine that ushered in amicable relation between Japan and ASEAN; Above: National flags of 10 ASEAN member states and the flag of ASEAN

Major role in ensuring Asian stability, success

KAZUO SUNAGA
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO ASEAN

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to ASEAN on the 50th anniversary of its founding.

Over the past 50 years, ASEAN has been resolute in pursuing integration in the areas of politics, security, the economy, society and culture. Thus, the ASEAN Community was founded at the end of 2015. During these five decades, ASEAN has played a major role in ensuring the stability and prosperity not only in its own region, but also in the whole of Asia.

At the time of its founding, ASEAN was still suffering from underdevelopment. Despite this, ASEAN member states overcame their differences in terms of country size, political regimes, and sociocultural character and achieved their current international positions. From the perspective of world history, this is a remarkable accomplishment. Historically, regions that were surrounded by great powers often suffered from conflicts and divisions, and were thus forced to endure tragic circumstances. Southeast Asia was no exception. With their strong and wise leadership, however, ASEAN leaders have overcome various difficulties and obstacles to move steadily toward regional integration.

"The ASEAN Way" respects the sovereignty of each country, understands diversity and takes sufficient time to form a consensus when necessary. The ASEAN Way represents the local wisdom of the region and serves as a potential model for resolving many of



the issues that plague the world. Currently, leaders and foreign ministers of neighboring countries meet annually through forums led by ASEAN, such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN+3, to discuss important regional issues. These forums would not exist without ASEAN. In other words, these forums are made possible because countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, Russia and the U.S. trust ASEAN. The association's "convening power" should be highly valued.

ASEAN's success is not limited to politics. Currently, the total gross domestic product of the 10 ASEAN member states in 2015 amounts to \$2.4 trillion, or 3.3 percent of the global GDP, and its trade volume stands at \$2.2 trillion, or 7.1 percent of world trade vol-

ume in 2016. In addition, Japan and others from across the world are investing heavily in ASEAN. This is a result of ASEAN's commitment to promote steady progress toward an open and liberal economic system since it agreed to the creation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) in 1992. In addition to its policy efforts, ASEAN's abundance of labor and rich natural resources have now earned ASEAN a reputation as a global economic powerhouse.

Japan is contributing greatly to ASEAN's development. The country has been engaged in economic cooperation with Southeast Asia since the 1950s, even before ASEAN was founded, through its official development assistance (ODA) and other financial assistance programs. Japan has cooperated with ASEAN member states in nation-building and human resource development efforts. For example, the amount of ODA that Japan has extended to ASEAN over the past 50 years is valued in excess of \$110 billion. As the ASEAN economy developed, ASEAN has also come to support Japan's economy. Indeed, ASEAN is Japan's second-largest trading partner and top investment destination in the world. There are about 10,000 Japanese-affiliated companies in the ASEAN region. Currently, ASEAN represents the key to Japan's growth strategy. Over the past 50 years, Japan and ASEAN have become essential economic partners.

In tandem with this, cultural and people-to-people exchanges have also grown over the years. The number of people visiting Japan from ASEAN member states increased

five-fold from 500,000 in 2006 to 2.5 million in 2016. The number of ASEAN students studying in Japan has also seen a six-fold increase during the same period. Fostering people-to-people exchanges and promoting mutual understanding, especially among the younger generation, are essential for maintaining and building stronger Japan-ASEAN relations.

At present, causes for instability such as the South China Sea issue remain and threats of terrorism and violent extremism seem to be on the rise. On the economic front, there are some trends in the world that are working against economic integration. Given the current climate, ASEAN will likely have to navigate difficult situations as it has in the past. I am confident, however, that ASEAN will overcome these challenges to continue to integrate and develop.

Japan is committed to continue cooperating with ASEAN to further promote regional stability and prosperity. In order to realize this, it is important that we share universal values such as freedom, democracy, rule-of-law and a commitment to a free and open economic system. They are embodied in the Five Principles of Japan's ASEAN Diplomacy that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced in January 2013. These are the values that Japan has unwaveringly adhered to in the post-war era and those that ASEAN has nurtured while respecting the diversity of its member states. For as long as Japan and ASEAN uphold these values, we will both stand to witness a bright future over the coming 50 years.

ASEAN history	
1967	ASEAN was founded with Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
1976	The first ASEAN summit meeting was held.
1992	The ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was established at the fourth ASEAN summit meeting.
2003	The ninth ASEAN summit meeting decided to establish the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2020.
2007	The plan to establish ASEAN Economic Community was pushed forward to 2015. The ASEAN Charter was signed.
2008	ASEAN Charter went in effect.
2015	The 27th ASEAN Economic Community adopted ASEAN Community Vision 2025. AEC was established.
1984	Brunei became the sixth member states.
1995	Vietnam became the seventh member state.
1997	Laos and Myanmar became the eighth and ninth member state.
1999	Cambodia became the 10th member state.



50 years of ASEAN

Working to boost regional business

The year 2017 is a landmark for the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was established half a century ago.

Looking back on the past 50 years, ASEAN, whose 10 member states are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, has gone through several milestones to become a cohesive group of nations enjoying some of the biggest economic growth in the world.

In short, ASEAN has evolved from a group of nations aiming to stabilize Southeast Asia to a group trying to become a major economic engine for the world by creating a market without economic barriers. It started with five founding countries — Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand — with Cambodia becoming the 10th member state in April 1999.

“ASEAN has done a great job creating a huge free-trade economic zone,” said Masataka Fujita, secretary-general of the ASEAN-Japan Centre.

“Tariffs among ASEAN member states were as high as 10 or 20 percent in the beginning, and they have gone as far as decreasing them to almost zero,” he said, adding that 99 percent of goods traded among member states — except for the newer member states of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) — are currently tariff-free.

ASEAN aims to reduce tariffs of 99 percent of CLMV goods to zero by 2018, under a new initiative of the ASEAN Economic Community, or AEC, which formed at the end of 2015. The formation of the AEC allowed ASEAN to become a more cohesive organization, while consolidating regional economic integration. Even in the pre-AEC period, ASEAN member states worked systematically on reducing tariffs and other economic barriers among themselves. The creation of AEC accelerated such activities.



Secretary-General of the ASEAN-Japan Centre Masataka Fujita speaks at the center in Tokyo on July 19. YOSHIKAKI MIURA

“The creation of the AEC was the biggest milestone for ASEAN. Member states have since renewed their commitments,” Fujita said.

Another milestone occurred in 2008, when the ASEAN Charter went into effect, he said. The charter functions as the guideline stipulating ASEAN’s principles.

“The ASEAN Charter outlines what ASEAN should aim to be in the future,” he said.

One of the principles in the ASEAN Charter is the encouragement of regional integration, which ASEAN is doing well.

The challenge is in the liberalization of services. This is an area that particularly needs improvement in lifting various restrictions on service suppliers to start businesses in other ASEAN countries, Fujita said. Every industry has restrictions against incoming companies to protect

existing businesses, and the retail industry specifically needs to be more open, he added.

“The further liberalization of this area will increase chances for Japanese retailers and other service companies because services account for a bigger portion of the economy than goods,” Fujita said.

While a number of challenges keep some areas of the Japanese competitiveness from flourishing in ASEAN, Japan-ASEAN relations have been — and remain — very favorable.

However, the relationship was not as smooth through the 1970s due to Japan’s preeminence in Southeast Asia.

Japan’s accelerated pace of trade and investment activities in Southeast Asian countries caused contentious economic relations leading to political concerns between ASEAN member states and Japan.

Under these circumstances, then-Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda made a speech in 1977 that would become known as the Fukuda Doctrine.

During this speech in Manila, Fukuda said that Japan and ASEAN member states are equal partners and that all parties should build “heart-to-heart” relationships.

Japan-ASEAN relations have since dramatically improved. The foundation of the ASEAN-Japan Centre in 1981 was based on the Fukuda Doctrine.

Since then, Japan and ASEAN have come closer and closer to economic equality.

In the 1980s, Japan’s gross domestic product was roughly 10 times as much as ASEAN’s 10 states combined. Currently, the ratio stands at 2-to-1.

This has come about as ASEAN’s economic position has become relatively stronger, rather than Japan’s economic position becoming weaker.

Even though the Japanese government took the initiative to build a strong relationship with ASEAN, it is worth noting that Japanese companies created private-sector-driven momentum to make it stronger, paving the way for AEC formation.

“Japanese companies basically presented challenges inside ASEAN and recommendations as to how ASEAN can improve itself,” Fujita said. “They urged member states to accelerate economic integration. Now they are in a win-win relation.”

Japanese companies must continue these efforts, Fujita said, because ASEAN is a very rapidly growing market and other nations also want to take advantage of ASEAN’s growth.

“Japan should really understand ASEAN’s attractiveness and think hard about how to gain economically,” he said. “For example, Japan has many small and mid-size companies, but little labor. ASEAN can be a good partner as a labor supplier. For that, Japanese companies can utilize

ASEAN-Japan relationship history	
1973	ASEAN-Japan Forum on Synthetic Rubber was established, marking the beginning of ASEAN-Japan cooperation.
1977	Fukuda Doctrine was announced.
1981	ASEAN-Japan Centre was established in Tokyo.
1997	The first ASEAN-Japan summit meeting was held.
2003	The first ASEAN-Japan commemorative summit meeting was held.
2004	Japan joined the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in South-east Asia.
2008	ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) went in effect.
2011	The Mission of Japan to ASEAN was established in Jakarta.
2013	40th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. The second ASEAN-Japan commemorative summit meeting was held.

ASEAN human resources.”

In return, ASEAN can use Japan’s technology to achieve breakthrough innovation for further growth, Fujita said. ASEAN owes its growth mainly to companies from outside ASEAN.

Japan has also been helping companies create long-term solutions. Japan’s official development assistance helps ASEAN to train its people in various skills and technologies.

“That does not have a short-term effect, but it will be very helpful in the long run,” Fujita said. Environmental technology is undoubtedly necessary for sustainable development, and Japan is very advanced in it, he added.

Such exchanges are promoted by the ASEAN-Japan Centre that supports both Japanese and ASEAN companies to flourish together by functioning as a bridge. The center promotes Japan and ASEAN’s relationship in trade, investment, tourism and various exchanges. Its activities include dialogue meetings, information seminars, capacity-building programs, among others, while providing platforms to enhance partnership between Japanese and ASEAN

companies.

Fujita said he wants to do something only the ASEAN-Japan Centre as an international organization can.

“Our clients are basically taxpayers of ASEAN member states and Japan. We need to show them we produce good results efficiently and effectively,” he said.

He is now shifting focus to calling on governments to create systems to make it easy for both parties to do business. The center is presenting policy recommendations to the governments of ASEAN member states.

The ASEAN-Japan Centre is taking on various new projects that no other organizations do. In one such project, the center is compiling 16 data and evidence-based research papers on global value chains. The 16 papers are designed to help gain understanding of what each member state creates in terms of value-added in various export products. They produce research papers on five industries — automotive, textiles and clothing, tourism, agribusiness and electronics — each for respective member countries and one for ASEAN as a whole.

Your Gateway to ASEAN and Japan

A regional center of excellence in trade, investment, tourism and exchanges of persons

The ASEAN-Japan Centre is an intergovernmental organization established by the ASEAN Member States and Japan in 1981. It has been promoting exports from ASEAN Member States to Japan while revitalizing investment and tourism, as well as people-to-people exchanges, between the ASEAN Member States and Japan through organizing seminars, workshops, and capacity building programs, research and policy analysis, missions, publication, and information services, among others.

ASEAN marks its golden jubilee in 2017

ASEAN marks its 50th anniversary on August 8, 2017. In celebration of ASEAN’s remarkable milestone, the ASEAN-Japan Centre is organizing several activities, including a series of symposiums and a reception jointly with the ASEAN Committee in Tokyo (ACT).

ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

(ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism)

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50 years of ASEAN

Youth encouraged to expand horizons through travel

The ASEAN-Japan Centre, which aims to promote trade, investment, tourism and other exchanges between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Japan, is holding various events this year to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of ASEAN.

In promotion of the Visit ASEAN@50 campaign, which the member states launched to boost regional tourism in celebration of the anniversary, the center will hold an event titled “Girls, go for a journey! Let’s go to ASEAN” in Osaka on Aug. 20.

The event, specifically targeting women in their 20s, is co-organized by the center and iD Inc., which operates a travel information website Tripping!

The special guest is Hinako Umemura, nicknamed Hinanchu, the leader of girl band Silent Siren, which enjoys tremendous popularity among teenage girls and women in their 20s. Hinanchu has lived in Indonesia for 10 years and will talk about the attractions of ASEAN, which is comprised of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Young people today are used to many forms of entertainment, such as the internet, games, TVs, manga and anime. This places travel in a relatively low position in the ranking of interest among youths. Meanwhile, they use Instagram and other social network sites every day to share their experiences with their friends and travel appears high among the experiences they want to share.

Hinanchu is the ideal person to promote ASEAN travel because she is familiar with ASEAN countries and overseas travel remains her hobby even after her return from Indonesia.

“We hope to inform people of the greatness of ASEAN countries and young women who recently began working are working hard now to select ASEAN as a travel destination at a time they deepen their interest in overseas travels during a



A seminar on travel to Southeast Asia was held in Tokyo, Aug. 1, as one of the events by the ASEAN-Japan Centre to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ASEAN. ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

period of change in their life environment, or to treat themselves. We also hope they continue visiting ASEAN into their 30s and 40s,” the ASEAN-Japan Centre said in a press release.

The event includes the introduction of ASEAN by the editor-in-chief of Tripping!, Hinanchu’s talk, a Q&A session, networking and mingling over a buffet of Southeast Asian cuisine and the announcement of winners of giveaways, including tickets to ASEAN countries and hotel vouchers.

As the sole agent in Japan to promote Visit ASEAN@50, the ASEAN-Japan Centre holds other events to educate Japanese that ASEAN is an good destination for getaways.

On Aug. 1, the center held a seminar to encourage Japanese in the travel and education industries to take students to ASEAN member states for school trips and

language-learning programs.

The seminar’s main organizer was the center, and its co-organizers were the tourism bureaus of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. It was also supported by the Japan Tourism Agency, Japan Association of Travel Agents and the association on school trips in Japan.

The seminar included discussions by travel bureaus of ASEAN member states, Japanese school operators, travel insurance company employees and other people working in the travel industry.

Other than tourism, the ASEAN-Japan Centre is engaged in promoting business exchanges in celebration of the 50th anniversary.

On Tuesday, the center and the ASEAN Committee in Tokyo will organize ASEAN 50th anniversary symposium “Reviews on ASEAN’s 50 years Path to the ASEAN Com-



Surin Pitsuwan, former secretary-general of ASEAN and former minister of foreign affairs of Thailand, delivers a speech as part of the 50th anniversary of ASEAN Special Lecture Series in Tokyo on May 19. ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

munity” in Tokyo, with co-organizer the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and supporters the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Japan External Trade Organization and Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The symposium includes the presentations, “A Half Century of ASEAN: Accomplishments and Challenges” by professor Susumu Yamakage, of the School of International Politics, Economics and Communication, Aoyama Gakuin University;

“ASEAN Economic Community: Embracing the Future, Learning from the Past” by Dionisius A. Narjoko, senior economist, ERIA; “Looking Back at Plant Relocations to ASEAN Nations by Japanese Industry” by Jun Iijima, assistant to the general manager, Overseas Industrial Park Dept. Sumitomo Corporation; and others, followed by a panel discussion and a Q&A session. Japanese-English simultaneous interpretation will be available.

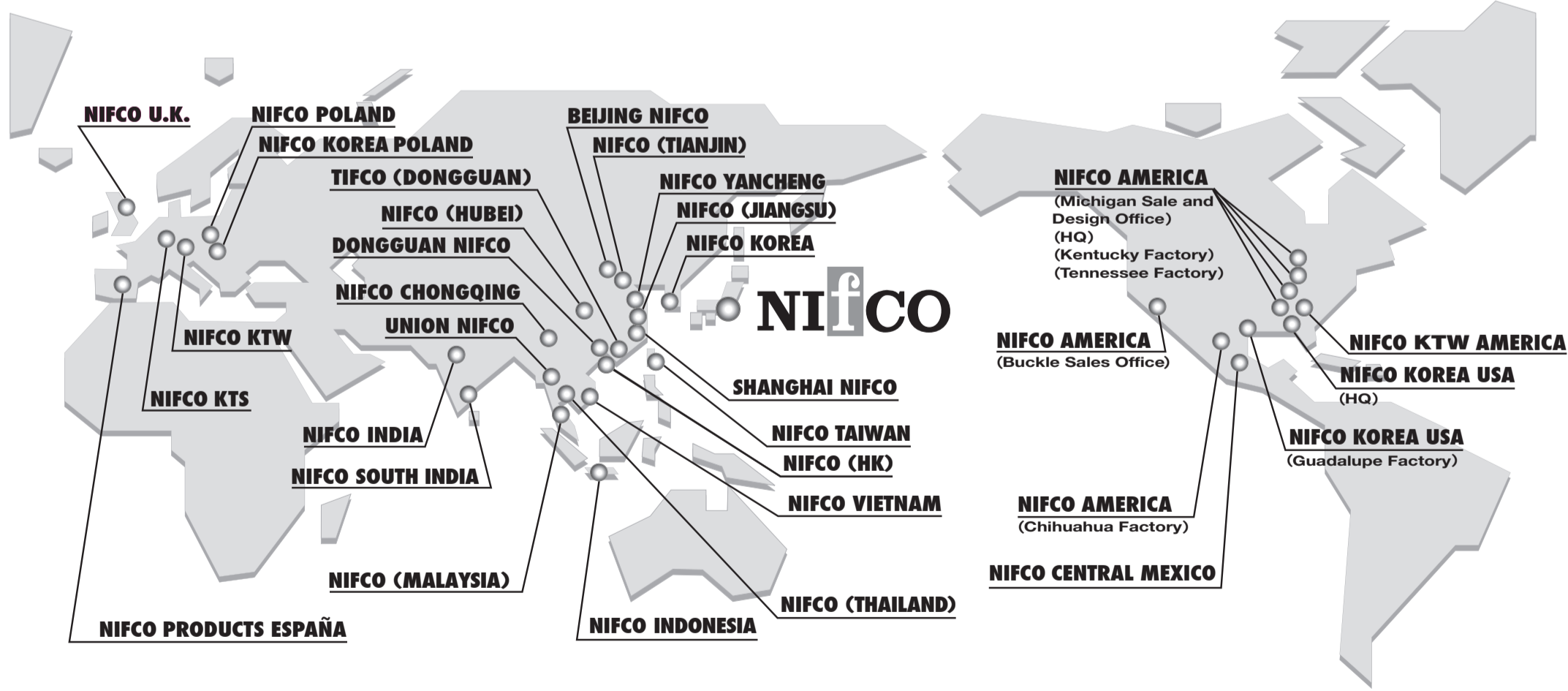
Similarly on Sept. 13, the center and the Institute of International Trade and Invest-

ment will jointly organize a symposium, “50 Years of ASEAN Economic Integration: Political and Economic Integration: Benefit and Challenge” in Tokyo, with co-organization by Nihon University College of Economics and support (tentatively) of JETRO, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Bunshindo Publishing Corp.

Invited speakers include professors from Tokyo University of Science, Waseda University, Keio University and other universities in Japan. The talks will be in Japanese.

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50 years of ASEAN

ASEAN students increase on high corporate demand

The recent boom in the number of students from ASEAN countries coming to Japan is expected to last until 2020, the target year set by the Japanese government for there to be 300,000 foreign students in the country, industry officials said.

The government in 2008 mapped out a plan to raise the number of foreign students studying in Japan to 300,000 by 2020 to promote globalization in the country and develop diversification in human resources. It is a concerted effort involving six government ministries, including the education, foreign and justice ministries.

The project appears to be on track in part on the back of the recent surge in the number of incoming students from ASEAN nations, statistics show. According to the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), 239,287 foreign students are studying in Japan as of May 1 at educational institutions, including universities, high schools, professional training schools and Japanese-language schools. The figure represents a 14.8 percent increase from a year earlier, following a 13.2 percent rise in the previous period. JASSO provides financial assistance to students, as well as offering support to foreign students studying in Japan and Japanese students studying abroad.

Although students from China make up the largest portion of the total figure, the number of students from some ASEAN countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia and Myanmar shows strong growth.

As of May 1, the number of students from Myanmar rose 39.8 percent from a year earlier, followed by a 38.4 percent increase in the number of Vietnamese students and 28.6 percent growth in the

number of students from Indonesia, according to JASSO data. In the same period, the number of Chinese students rose 4.6 percent, the statistics show. In fact, the number of Vietnamese students learning Japanese in language schools (25,228 in the year ended March 31, 2017), exceeded that of Chinese students in the year, according to the data.

The rise in the number of incoming students from ASEAN nations, in particular from Vietnam, Indonesia and Myanmar, is in part due to the countries' economic development, coupled with the increase in the presence of Japanese companies in those countries, said Tomohiro Miyai, deputy director of the Information Service Division at JASSO's Student Exchange Department.

"More Japanese companies are entering the markets in those three countries and that makes students there more familiar with Japan," Miyai told The Japan Times in an interview. "The presence of Japanese companies also offers local students job opportunities there after they finish studying in Japan."

Also behind the boom is the promotion of student recruiting activities by Japanese universities in those countries, as well as their efforts to enhance degree courses offered in English back home, Miyai said.

Rikkyo University in March this year opened an ASEAN office in Jakarta to build and promote a communication network with universities in Indonesia as well as those in neighboring countries, in an attempt to attract more students from the region. The university at present has tie-ups with 21 universities in eight ASEAN nations and has a total of 30 students from those countries, including nine from Thailand and seven from Malaysia.

Sophia University three years ago started a student exchange program with six universities in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. To begin with, the university accepted three foreign students while 15 Japanese students went to the three Southeast Asian nations.

In Bangkok, Meiji University ASEAN center at Srinakharinwirot University, to nurture future leaders, as well as develop human resources capable of building bridges between Japan and ASEAN nations. At present, the university has cooperative accords with 39 universities, departments and faculties in eight ASEAN countries.

After graduating from Japanese universities or finishing educational programs in Japan, some ASEAN students return home to work, either for local companies or for Japanese companies back home. Another option for them is to look for a job in Japan, as more Japanese companies are seeking talented and skilled workers from the pool of ASEAN students.

There were 11,328 Japanese companies operating businesses in ASEAN countries as of May 2016, according to Teikoku Databank Ltd., a researcher and provider of Japanese corporate data. Of the total, 25.6 percent are large corporations with annual revenue of ¥10 billion or more, the largest portion, while small companies with annual revenue of less than ¥100 million make up 5.4 percent.

"We have a growing number of job offers especially from small to midsize local Japanese companies," said Kenta Watanabe, president of Node Inc., a provider of online job-matching services specifically focused on students from ASEAN countries. In its first year of operations in



The number of students from ASEAN region is increasing in Japan. JOSAI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

2014, Node had only 16 Japanese companies as clients. That number has surged to 154, up from 131 last year.

"Their need is to find someone with specific skills, like a CAD (computer-aided design) operator, and they don't have to be Japanese," Watanabe told The Japan Times in an interview. "As a matter of fact, that is the most frequent and pressing demand we receive from our clients."

Since the status of Japanese universities is lower than top-ranking universities in the U.S. and Europe, ASEAN students are inclined to come to Japan to learn practical professional skills and know-how, rather than earning a university degree, JASSO's Miyai explained.

Even so, the Japanese language is a barrier that must be overcome to work at a

Japanese company, in particular at small to midsize concerns. Workers from overseas may not be required to have a high-level of Japanese language proficiency if they only have to communicate in-house with their colleagues. But, if they need to talk to clients, even about technical subjects, it would be a different story, Watanabe explained.

Although more Japanese universities are offering academic programs conducted only in English, many local Japanese companies still require foreign job seekers to have a high level of Japanese proficiency. The Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services jointly conduct the Japanese Language Proficiency Test worldwide, a benchmark exam for foreigners seeking to work in

Japan. Of the five levels, the N1 top-level proficiency is said to be required by many Japanese companies.

Watanabe, however, is optimistic about overcoming the language barrier in the long term as he expects even small to midsize companies to be more forgiving with regard to the Japanese ability of foreign workers because "Japanese society is more open than ever before to accepting foreign workers," he said.

With the government's 2008 plan to raise the number of foreign students to 300,000 by 2020, coupled with universities' efforts to attract them, Japan opened the door for studying in the country. Now there should be "an exit" in the form of work opportunities ready for them, Watanabe said.

Program provides international immersion

Rikkyo University in Tokyo has launched the Global Liberal Arts Program (GLAP) this spring to nurture young talent to become global leaders, with the foundation of education based on Christianity and liberal arts.

GLAP is an undergraduate program in which all classes are conducted in English. All students live together with international students in a dormitory for 16 months prior to a mandatory one-year study abroad experience beginning in the fall of the second year.

Following their time overseas, the third-year students are better prepared to further explore one of three concentrations — humanities, citizenship and business — before moving on to their fourth year and graduation thesis.

The program aims to help students acquire global leadership skills through studying in international environments that are diverse in nationality, culture and value. The program selectively admits 20 students a year.

The university's Master of Public Management and Administration (MPMA) Course offers an interdisciplinary post-graduate curriculum entirely in English for students mainly from the Association of Southeast



Students have many opportunities for international exchanges on campus. RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

Asian Nations member states (ASEAN), the Middle East and Africa. The MPMA Course also offers the Linkage Double Degree Program for partner universities.

To better support the partnership with universities and government organizations in the ASEAN region, Rikkyo University in March established its fifth overseas office in Jakarta.

The Jakarta office plays a major role in recruiting students to the Linkage Double Degree Program and networking with the universities, as well as public relations activities of Rikkyo University.

The university partners with 21 universities in eight countries among the ASEAN member states, accepting 30 students from the region.



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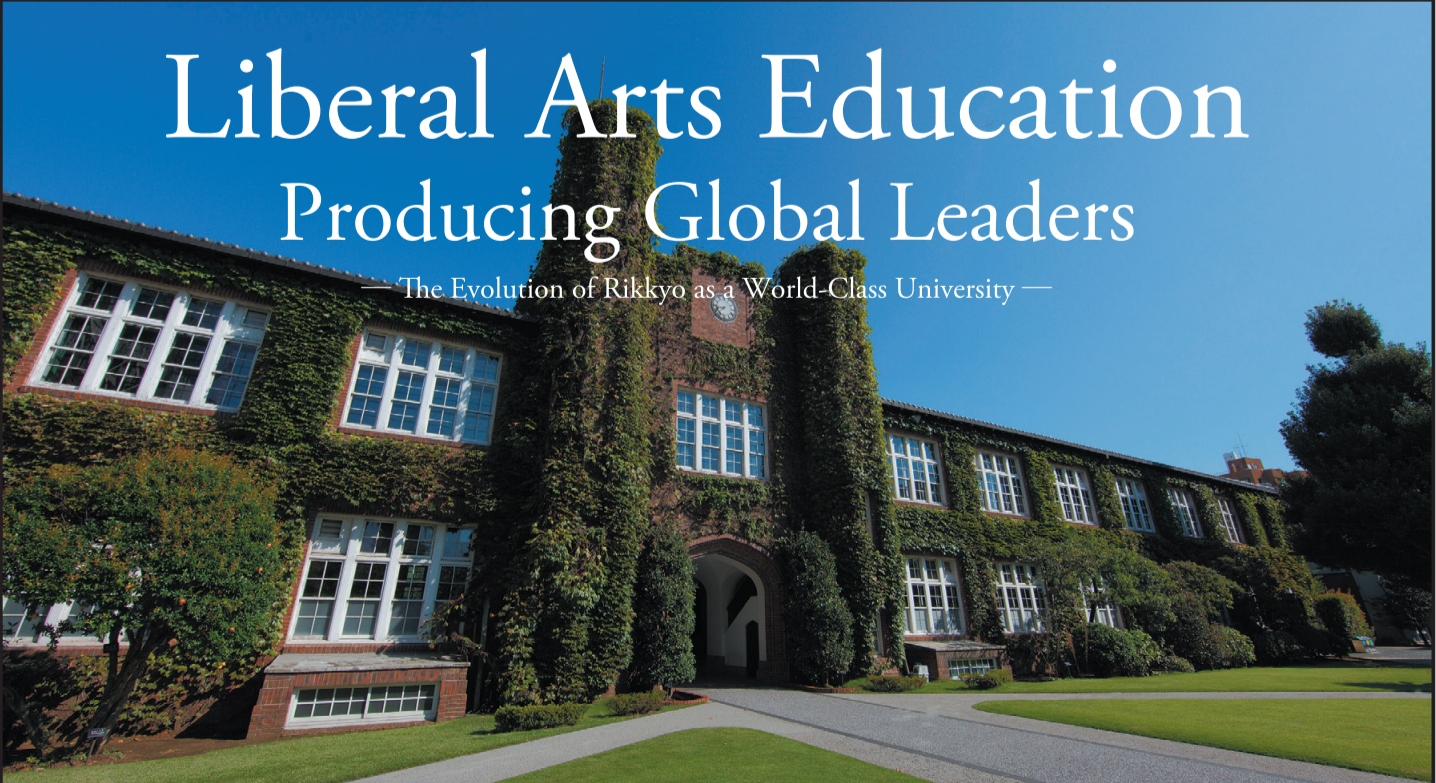
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50 years of ASEAN

University actively participating in exchange programs

Sophia University in Tokyo was selected by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as one of 11 subsidy recipients for participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Program in 2013. Since then, Sophia University has seen more than 100 outbound students and more than 60 inbound students participate in exchanges with ASEAN member states.

AIMS was initially piloted in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand and has been developed into an ASEAN-wide program including Japan as its extended member country. Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization—Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development serves as the secretariat.

“It has been a great honor for us to be part of such an international network as one of the universities representing Japan,” said Miki Sugimura, Sophia vice president for Global Academic Affairs.

Students have participated in exchanges under the Sophia AIMS (SAIMS) Program. Seven universities in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia invite Sophia students to join local students and study in diverse faculties they have to offer.

The SAIMS Program offers a wide selection of subjects mainly in social sciences, engineering and Japanese language, in addition to a compulsory course titled Introduction to Trans-Disciplinary Human Development. This course aims to enhance the connection among different areas of expertise in order to deepen knowledge and discussion on key issues. Such issues include human dignity, human rights, social justice, inclusion and sustainable development.

“We have especially focused on environment issues because they span many fields and should be discussed from various perspectives,” Sugimura said. Sophia University’s diverse specialties offered in its nine faculties and 29 departments help students gain cross-disciplinary understanding.

The classes offered in the one-semester SAIMS program are open for other students at Sophia, in order to foster dialogues among diverse students groups. The Sophia-Nanzan Latin America Program is another ongo-



From left: Miki Sugimura, Sophia vice president for Global Academic Affairs, Mikiko Michelle Sugiura, associate professor and one of the Best Practice Teachers in the 2015 fall semester at Sophia, and Yasushi Hirosato, professor of the Faculty of Global Studies and the Graduate School of Global Studies



ing student exchange project with six Latin American countries that is also sponsored by MEXT. Participants in the two programs interact in various situations, as a means to create diverse and comparative learning environment.

“It is great to see all of these students learning and holding discussions together. The SAIMS program has become a platform for study and friendship at the same time. We call it a connecting hub not only for students, but also for all the teachers who are involved,” Sugimura said.

“Participating universities have also experienced various changes through the program. For example, Indonesia’s Bogor Agricultural University set up a curriculum in English for international students when it was decided that one of our students would attend the university through SAIMS. We were greatly touched by their passion, and the student was highly motivated throughout the program,” she added.

On the other hand, there are hurdles that students themselves have to clear.

“Japanese students are often shocked by the English language and communication skills, as well as the leadership, of exchange students from ASEAN countries, which is a great opportunity for them to realize the level of global standards,” said Mikiko Michelle Sugiura, associate professor in charge of four

SAIMS courses.

The students not only study in classrooms, but also interact with the people around them and experience how they live. “People-to-people connectivity is what we emphasize,” said Yasushi Hirosato, professor of the Faculty of Global Studies and the Graduate School of Global Studies.

Hirosato is the director of the Sophia ASEAN Hub Center, which is located at the Faculty of Political Science at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. Sophia University has several other overseas offices, but he pointed out that this one is especially important and unique.

“While ASEAN member states and Japan maintain friendly and stable relationships, there is so much dynamism in their economies and societies. We are also geographically close to each other and there is so much more we can do together,” Hirosato said.

ASEAN countries have the broad understanding for the diversity of ethnicity, culture, religion and gender that Japan lacks. On the other hand, some of them are currently going through the socioeconomic, political, or environmental changes that Japan has already been through and may use Japan’s experiences as a reference.

Sugimura finds that they are much faster to adapt to change than Japan, and their policy-making process is also quick because their

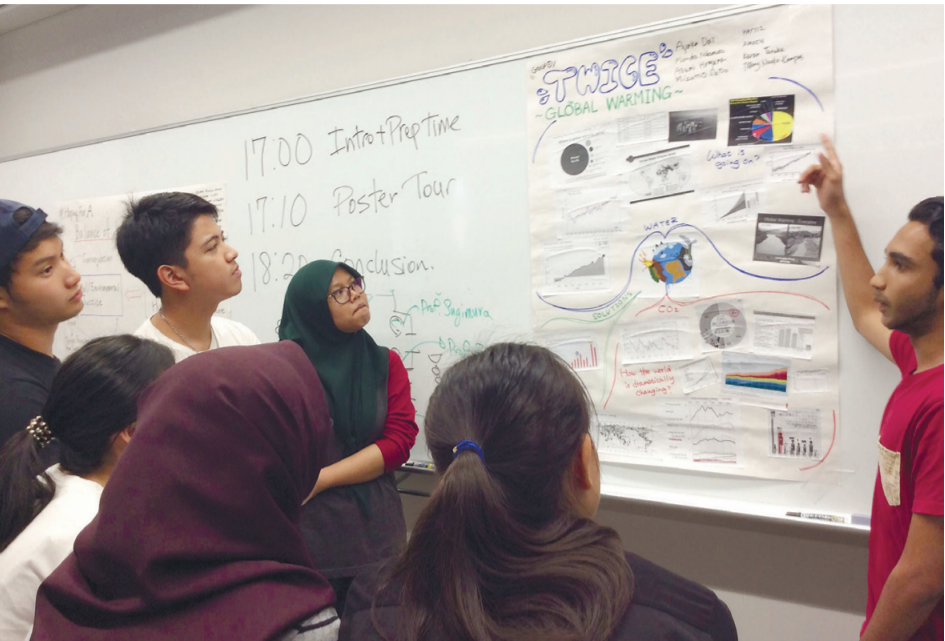
societies and economies are vibrant and still growing. “It is also noteworthy that more women are taking on leadership roles in ASEAN member states compared to Japan,” said Sugiura.

Unfortunately, 2017 will be the final year for the MEXT’s five-year subsidy for supporting the SAIMS program. However, Hirosato and other academic staff who have been engaged in the program are firmly determined to continue and strengthen the relationships they have built among the participating universities.

“Thanks to the government’s support, we were able to create strong partnerships with leading universities in the ASEAN member states. The source of the support is public funding, so we want to return something to society at large,” said Hirosato.

“We believe there are ways to enhance the relationships further; the halal cafeteria that recently opened on campus provides opportunities for both domestic and international students at Sophia University to interact with and understand more about Islamic culture. Additionally, we can try expanding the focus of our trans-disciplinary studies from the environment to other topics, such as migration, to include more diverse students in discussions,” Sugimura said.

As the name suggests, the Sophia ASEAN Hub Center can serve as the connecting hub



Students taking part in TDHD, compulsory course of SAIMS Program. SOPHIA UNIVERSITY

for communities within and centered around ASEAN member states to achieve further and deeper collaborations within the network.

As the former principal education specialist at the Asian Development Bank, Hirosato has rich experience in working with people from ASEAN member states, and he is fully committed to use his knowledge and experience in expanding the projects that the Sophia ASEAN Hub Center has been carrying out. These include organizing study tours and symposiums, arranging internships, supporting joint research on environmental issues and building partnerships with universities and international organizations in Bangkok, just to name a few.

Sophia University is planning to start the Sophia English-medium Education Program. This program hopes to offer more opportunities for students to learn and discuss topics, such as sustainable development, that are also among the top concerns for ASEAN countries.

Sophia University expects that this program will attract more students from ASEAN and create lively exchanges of ideas. “Bilateral discussions sometimes become too direct and cause friction. There are situations where multilateral communication works better.

The ASEAN member states are diverse in many ways and can bring well-balanced and flexible ideas into tense discussions,” Sugimura said.

“There are risks and benefits in everything. Through working together based on equal partnership, we want all our inbound and outbound students to experience managing risks and gaining benefits in order to return something to society. Such experience will help build confidence in the students who will shape the future of ASEAN and Japan,” Sugiura said.

To witness the future success of the participants of the SAIMS exchange program is the shared goal for everyone involved.

Indeed, past SAIMS participants successfully landed international jobs bridging Japan and ASEAN. One of them is working at a Thai branch of a Japanese business consulting company.

Another is doing internship at a Japanese real estate company, Sekai Property, in Malaysia that deals with clients and properties in Japan, as well as Malaysia, and employs Japanese.

“I’m planning to further my studies in Tokyo and possibly work there in the future,” he said.

Deep commitment to temple preservation

Sophia University has a long and amicable relationship with Cambodia originating in professor Yoshiaki Ishizawa’s long-term commitment to preserve and restore the Angkor Wat temple complex, a World Heritage site and one of the most important archeological sites in Southeast Asia.

The complex stretches over approximately 400 sq. kilometers in Siem Reap province and consists of as many as 700 remains from the Khmer Empire of the ninth to 14th centuries.

The buildings, monuments and Buddha statues underwent decay as political turmoil, especially since 1970 when a military coup took place followed by four years of Khmer Rouge rule in 1975, engulfed the country.

Ishizawa has been involved in the conservation since he was a student in 1961. However, he suspended his activities during the years of instability, returning in the early 1980s, shortly after the Khmer Rouge

went out of power.

From the ’80s to the early ’90s, international organizations were hesitant to provide support for the work because Cambodia’s domestic situation was still unstable. However, Ishizawa knew that Angkor’s preservation was important to all Cambodians regardless of political beliefs.

He used his own money to hire villagers to clear trees and bushes, and clean the black mold that had grown to cover the buildings and monuments over the decade.

Ishizawa also networked with international organizations and specialists. His efforts led to the establishment of the Sophia University Angkor International Mission that played an important part in research and training, as well as conservation work, under Ishizawa’s leadership.

Since 1991, knowledge and personnel exchanges have gone one through various training programs. Additionally, Ishizawa brought Japanese professors to Cambodia

for lectures on related topics, led Sophia students to conservation sites for fieldwork and supported research students from the Royal University of Fine Arts in Cambodia to gain master’s and Ph.D.s at Sophia University through fieldwork and research.

In 1996, the Asia Center for Research and Human Development was established with Ishizawa heading up the center, which aims to develop human resources in Cambodia based on Ishizawa’s belief, “The protection and restoration of the sites of Cambodia should be carried out by Cambodians, for Cambodians.”

In 2001, 274 statues of Buddha were found during a restoration of the Banteay Kdei Temple. It was an encouraging and rewarding success for the local conservation trainees, and exactly the kind of achievement that the mission has been aiming for.

These statues are stored and exhibited at the Preah Norodom Sihanouk Angkor



Restoration work at Angkor Wat SOPHIA UNIVERSITY

Museum, one of the museums participating in the ASEAN Cultural Properties and Museum International Workshop this year.

Ishizawa, who has devoted more than 50 years of his life to help Cambodian people protect and restore Angkor Wat’s heritage, received the 2017 Ramon Mag-saysay Award. With a history of 60 years as the most prestigious award in Asia, it is referred to as the Nobel Prize of the East.

Ishizawa and Sophia University will continue their collaborative activities with Cambodians to preserve the treasures of Angkor Wat.

Halal cafe encourages cultural exchange through shared meals

Sophia University launched the Tokyo Halal Deli and Cafe on its campus in September as part of its measures to respond to the diversity of nationalities, cultures and religions of its students and faculty.

The cafe uses only certified halal ingredients that are free of pork, seasonings and other ingredients containing pork extracts or alcohol.

The university began selling halal bento lunches in 2015, and they were becoming so popular that all 150 boxes often sold out. Not only Muslims, but also other students, staff and teachers had been enjoying the bento, which led to the university’s decision to open a cafe to offer more varieties of halal food.

The cafe is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays, offering a selection of breakfast, small a la carte dishes, deli sets, vegetarian dishes, desserts and drinks, many of which



Tokyo Halal Deli and Cafe SOPHIA UNIVERSITY

are available for takeout.

Supporting the diet of 50 Muslim students on campus is obviously its main purpose, but as an international university that partners with 307 universities in 61 countries and regions, the cultural exchange, experience and understanding that starts over a meal is also important.

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- Faculty of Humanities
- Faculty of Human Sciences
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Economics
- Faculty of Foreign Studies

- Faculty of Global Studies
- Faculty of Science and Technology (Program in English is available)

English-taught Programs

- Faculty of Liberal Arts
- Faculty of Science and Technology

Graduate Schools

Japanese-taught Programs

- Graduate School of Theology
- Graduate School of Humanities
- Graduate School of Applied Religious Studies
- Graduate School of Human Sciences
- Graduate School of Law
- Graduate School of Economics
- Graduate School of Languages and Linguistics

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50 years of ASEAN

ASEAN, Japan offer tourists great diversity

Tourism is one of the key industries in the respective ASEAN member states. The ASEAN member states are enriched with attractive tourism destinations that include renowned resorts surrounded by breathtaking nature and historical places that are designated as World Heritage sites.

In addition, having very little time difference with Japan, ASEAN countries are popular destinations for Japanese tourists as one can casually enjoy overseas travel. As a result, more than 4.6 million Japanese tourists visit the ASEAN mem-

ber states every year.

Meanwhile, as the middle class has expanded with ASEAN's economic growth, Japan today has become a popular tourist destination among people from the ASEAN region. This trend has been accelerated by the emergence of low-cost carriers and changing lifestyles. The number of member state visitors to Japan tripled over five years to more than 1.6 million in 2014.

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Each country's description is an excerpt from the ASEAN-Japan Centre website.



ASEAN member states offer tourists an abundance of nature and destinations to enjoy.
ALL PHOTOS IN THE ASEAN TOURISM COLUMNS ON THIS PAGE ARE FROM ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE.

Malaysia: Multiculturalism flourishes in diverse tropical paradise



The Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia is a multiethnic nation where diverse cultures coexist in harmony. The Malay culture thrives side by side with the Chinese and Hindu communities. Malaysia is blessed with tropical rainforest, some of which is said to be the world's oldest rainforest and is designated as a World Heritage site for the value of its diverse ecosystem.

Since 1970, Malaysia has been actively attracting foreign capital and promoting industrialization and technology transfer, which has led to a significant economic growth.

Singapore: Culturally diverse country continues to lead ASEAN economy

Singapore, with its beautiful landscape and rich nature, is a city-state facing the Johor Strait at the south end of the Malay Peninsula. Deriving its cultural aspects mainly from China, Malaysia, India and Europe, Singapore's culture is a harmonious blend of diversified Oriental and Occidental cultures, languages and religions.

The country has accomplished miraculous growth through development of its electronics industry. Today, Singapore is the center of finance and trade.



Singapore Botanical Gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage site

Brunei: Land of peace, abundant natural resources aims for diversification



Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in the capital of Brunei Darussalam

Located on the northwest coast of the island of Borneo, Brunei Darussalam possesses sizable resources of oil and natural gas and a population comprised primarily of devout Muslims.

Since achieving independence from the U.K. in 1984, Brunei Darussalam has maintained stability in its domestic affairs through monarchical rule and has experienced high economic growth fueled by its economic base of energy resources. Today, it promotes diversification of the economy, improvement of social infrastructure and development of human resources.

Indonesia: More than 13,000 islands to explore in world's-largest archipelago

Indonesia encompasses the largest national territory and population in the ASEAN member states, as well as the world's largest Muslim population. As each island or region has its own culture, Indonesia is characterized by unity in a diversity of historical, cultural and social traits.

Having suffered from the impact of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, Indonesia's economy recovered through strong private consumption and export, and is now actively granting incentives to encourage foreign direct investment from around the world.



Women in traditional Indonesian garments

Myanmar: Natural resources, growth potential drawing attention



Shwedagon Pagoda in central Yangon, Myanmar

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a multi-ethnic country made up of more than 130 nationalities, with fertile land facing the Bay of Bengal, as well as the Andaman Sea. It is an agro-based nation, with over half of its workforce engaged in agriculture. Its domestic economic activities have been dormant due to a closed socialist economic policy since 1962.

The 2015 general election saw the first civilian leader in more than 50 years, giving more impetus to further economic development.

Thailand: Longstanding cultural traditions preserved alongside lush nature

Having never been subject to foreign colonial rule, Thailand has evolved through history with its original culture intact. Most of its population is Buddhist, and Buddhism, ethnicity and monarchy fulfill important functions as the three main pillars supporting the nation.

Thailand has successfully industrialized as a result of attracting foreign capital from Japan and other countries since the 1980s. Additionally, Thailand offers a wide variety of tourist attractions, including Bangkok, and historical places registered as World Heritage sites and beautiful beach resorts.



Wat Phra Kaew is one of the most visited temples n Thailand.

Cambodia: Home of the world-famous Angkor Archaeological Park



Cambodia's magnificent Angkor Wat

Located in the center of the Indochina Peninsula, Cambodia is blessed with fertile land and abundant water resources supplied by the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake. Most of the areas around its northern border are covered by forests.

About 95 percent of its nationals are Buddhists.

The country's main industries are agriculture and tourism. The World Heritage site of Angkor attracts an especially large number of tourists every year.

Laos: Striving for economic growth through reform and tourism development

Surrounded by five countries, Lao PDR is the only landlocked nation in ASEAN and is comprised of some 50 ethnic groups. 70 percent of the population is primarily devout Buddhists.

The country embraces its rich natural environment, characterized by its abundant water resources derived from the Mekong River that flows from north to south in the country. The main industry is agriculture. Meanwhile, studded with attractive World Heritage sites such as Luang Prabang and Vat Phou, the country is also active in developing its tourism industry.



The ancient town of Luang Prabang in the center of northern Laos

Philippines: Island nation attracts tourists with dynamic natural beauty



Philippine's Boracay for beach lovers around the globe

The Philippines is an archipelagic state that is made up of more than 7,000 islands. With a population that is approximately 90 percent Christian, it is the only predominantly Christian country in ASEAN. A blend of its own native lifestyle together with those of the U.S. and Europe has produced today's unique Philippine culture.

Tourists can enjoy exciting trips to the energetic capital Manila, as well as inhabited islands that provide exclusive access to blue water, white beaches and verdant tropical rain forests.

Vietnam: Fiscal growth, market economy, liberalization key for change

Vietnam is a multiethnic country comprised of about 55 minority groups. The country was unified in 1976 after the end of the Vietnam War the previous year.

In 1986, the government adopted the market economy system and is moving forward with "Doi Moi," which is a renovation policy aiming to liberalize trade and investment with foreign countries. With a high growth rate brought by this policy, the country has been achieving exceptional economic growth.

Vietnam has many tourist sites such as Hue, Hoi An and Ha Long Bay.



Vietnam's Ha Long Bay is a popular travel destination.

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Siberian Rubythroat

Brown Hawk Owl

Migratory birds that in spring return to their native land of Japan from faraway ASEAN countries and return to those countries in autumn.

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