

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
Venue : [s.l]
Date : 1 AUGUST 2002
Title : ASEAN-JAPAN DIALOGUE AT THE PMC 10+1 SESSION WITH JAPAN

Your Excellency Yorika Kawaguchi,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Your Excellency U Win Aung,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar

Distinguished Colleagues

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me, at the outset, to echo the sentiments of my ASEAN colleague, the Foreign Minister of Myanmar in welcoming Your Excellency Yorika Kawaguchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, to the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Session with Japan this afternoon.

As the incoming Coordinator of the ASEAN-Japan dialogue, I am pleased to note the progress and development of Japan-ASEAN relations. Malaysia takes pride and is deeply honoured to assume the Country Coordinatorship for the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue from Myanmar in 2003. In this regard, on behalf of my ASEAN Colleagues, I wish to take this opportunity to thank Myanmar for its excellent steering of the Dialogue relations during its coordinatorship. During this period, ASEAN-Japan relations have moved closer not only in the economic sphere of trade and investment but also in other areas, ranging from culture and environment as well as political and security issues.

Our sessions in the past have proven to be productive and mutually beneficial as Japan is one of the most active Dialogue partners of ASEAN. It is our believe that the ASEAN-Japan dialogue relations could be looked upon as one of the building blocks in strengthening and developing further East Asia cooperation.

Malaysia will do its outmost to ensure continuity and enhancement of dialogues between the leaders of ASEAN and Japan on a regular basis. We look forward to work together with Japan and ASEAN colleagues to further strengthen ASEAN-Dialogue relations. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the continuous support shown by Japan through out the years especially during the crisis in 1997-98. We are grateful for all the assistance, which Japan has so generously extended to us over the years. I believe Japan will continue to do so, particularly with respect to ASEAN programmes aimed at bridging the development gap within ASEAN.

In conclusion, it is my earnest hope the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue would continue to make good progress. I trust that Japan will continue to extend to Malaysia the same cooperation that it has extended to Myanmar, to enable us to successfully carry out the task of Coordinator of the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue in July 2003.

Thank you.