



# Japan Hosts the ASEAN-Japan Special Youth Forum for Promoting the Rule of Law

Recommendations presented at the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers

**The Ministry of Justice of Japan (MOJ) and the Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ) co-hosted the ASEAN-Japan Special Youth Forum for Promoting the Rule of Law (Special Youth Forum) to facilitate discussion on the rule of law among the youth in Japan and ASEAN countries. The two-day Forum was held on July 5 and 6, 2023, at the Hotel New Otani (Tokyo).**

## Overview of the ASEAN-Japan Special Youth Forum for Promoting the Rule of Law

This year (2023) marks the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. The MOJ and TIJ co-hosted the Special Youth Forum in conjunction with the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers (AJSMJ). At the Forum, more than 60 youths (aged 18 to 25) from Japan, ASEAN countries, and Timor-Leste\* gathered for a lively discussion in English on the theme of “Building Justice Literacy for Enhanced Access to Justice: the key to the rule of law in the digital era.” The outcomes of their discussions were submitted as recommendations to the AJSMJ.

## Significance and Achievement of the Forum

The Forum brought together young people with diverse backgrounds and values from each country for a proactive discussion on “the rule of law.” Encouraging interest in and understanding of the rule of law among the youth in Japan and ASEAN countries is essential for sustainably strengthening and promoting the rule of law in both regions. This presented a significant opportunity to foster solidarity, dialogue, and mutual understanding, as well as to build partnerships for the future of both regions. In addition, as the Special Youth Forum was held concurrently at the same venue as the AJSMJ, the outcomes of the Forum were submitted to the AJSMJ as recommendations. This



ASEAN-Japan Special Youth Forum for Promoting the Rule of Law logo



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Presentation by the Co-Chairs of the Special Youth Forum at the “Justice Affairs Diplomacy Ministerial Forum“



Group sessions

encouraged youths to build not only friendly relationships with other youth participants, but also intergenerational relationships with the political leaders in Japan and from ASEAN member states, and thereby fresh perspectives of the youths were delivered to the international community. Providing these opportunities will help promote youth empowerment.

**Future Prospects**

The MOJ has been committed to promoting youth empowerment through the Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness and plans to continue to host the Global Youth Forum in coming years. As part of its focus on the next generation, the MOJ has also proposed the creation of a framework for regular dialogue among young officials

who are the torch-bearers of our future in the legal and judicial fields from the G7 and ASEAN countries, which is called the “Next Leaders’ Forum”, at the ASEAN-G7 Justice Ministers’ Interface, and obtained support from each participating country. The idea is to strengthen solidarity between the G7 and ASEAN by providing periodical opportunities for dialogue among young officials of those countries. The MOJ will continue to work actively to ensure that members of coming generations share fundamental values such as the rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights.

\* Timor-Leste’s membership in ASEAN was approved in principle at the ASEAN Summit held in November 2022. The country is permitted observer status in ASEAN-related meetings pending full membership.



Participants at the Special Youth Forum