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ASEAN-JAPAN RELATIONS

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ASEAN-JAPAN RELATIONS

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First published in Singapore in 2014 by
ISEAS Publications
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasir Panjang
Singapore 119614

E-mail: publish@iseas.edu.sg *Website:* bookshop.iseas.edu.sg

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ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

ASEAN-Japan relations / edited by Takashi Shiraishi and Takaaki Kojima.

1. Southeast Asia—Foreign relations—Japan.
2. Japan— Foreign relations—Southeast Asia.
3. Southeast Asia—Foreign economic relations—Japan.
4. Japan—Foreign economic relations—Southeast Asia.
5. East Asia—Economic integration.

I. Kojima, Takaaki

DS525.9 J3A811

2014

ISBN 978-981-4519-21-2 (soft cover)

ISBN 978-981-4519-22-9 (E-book PDF)

Typeset by International Typesetters Pte Ltd
Printed in Singapore by Mainland Press Pte Ltd

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PREFACE

In the autumn of 2011 I proposed a joint study on ASEAN-Japan relations to Ambassador K. Kesavapany, then director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), and Professor Takashi Shiraishi, president of the Graduate Institute of Policy Studies (GRIPS). They gave their consent to my proposal. Ambassador Tan Chin Tiong, director of ISEAS, added his support to the project.

The objectives of the proposed joint study were to re-examine and critically analyze relations between ASEAN and Japan and to give future perspectives and directions. I was of the view that despite its importance, the ASEAN-Japan relationship had been undervalued and overlooked on both sides in recent years. In this respect, however, I am happy to observe that there has been a favorable change, especially since Shinzo Abe came back to power as prime minister of Japan in December 2012. He is focusing on ASEAN as one of the pillars in his foreign policy.

To implement the joint study, Professor Shiraishi and I tried to recruit competent contributors not only academics but also practitioners from ASEAN and Japan to cover various fields such as foreign policy, security, business, development assistance, and fiscal cooperation and to shed light from different angles. We are grateful that Professor Tommy Koh, ambassador-at-large at Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Professor Kishore Mahbubani, dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, and Rodolfo Severino, former ASEAN secretary-general, accepted our request to contribute.

I acknowledge the support of the Japan Foundation, which provided the grant for the publication of this monograph. I would like to express my appreciation also to six generous donors to the project: Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsui, Sumitomo Corporation, Itochu Corporation, Marubeni, and Sojitz Corporation.

I am indebted to Sunandini Arora Lal, Wee Wong, and Dr. Motoko Kawano of GRIPS for their painstaking efforts at editing this monograph.

Last but not least, I thank Professor Shiraishi, co-editor of this monograph. Without his distinguished expertise and extensive network, this publication would not have been possible.

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