



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ASEAN And Japan Plan To Step Up Defence Cooperation**

1. Singapore's Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen and the Japanese Minister of Defense Takeshi Iwaya co-chaired the ASEAN-Japan Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting today, on the sidelines of the 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the 5th ADMM-Plus.
2. During the meeting, the ASEAN Defence Ministers welcomed Minister Iwaya in assuming his new appointment and expressed confidence that ASEAN's cooperation with Japan will strengthen under his leadership. They noted that this year marks the 45th year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and commended the significant progress in all areas of political-security, economic, and socio-cultural cooperation. The ASEAN Defence Ministers also supported Japan's proposals to enhance practical defence cooperation between Japan and ASEAN to build ASEAN's capacity against regional security challenges, including a professional airmanship programme.
3. Dr Ng and Minister Iwaya welcomed the strong progress of ASEAN-Japan defence cooperation. Dr Ng said, "Japan introduced the "Vientiane Vision" in 2016. And at that time, it was a bold initiative and since then, both ASEAN-Japan Ship Rider Cooperation and ASEAN-Japan Joint Exercise for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (Observation Programme) have developed." Minister Iwaya also said, "During the meeting, I expressed that Japan would promote the practical cooperation with ASEAN so as to support improvement of interoperability among defence authorities in the region. As an example of practical cooperation, I announced that Japan is planning to launch "Professional Airmanship Programme". This programme seeks to further enhance confidence-building among Japan Air Self-Defense Force and air services of all ASEAN member states. Through inviting air officers of ASEAN to Japan, this programme aims at promoting shared values to ensure rule of law."
4. Minister Iwaya, who is on his first official visit to Singapore, will join the ASEAN Defence Ministers as well as his other Plus counterparts for the 5th ADMM-Plus later today.

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