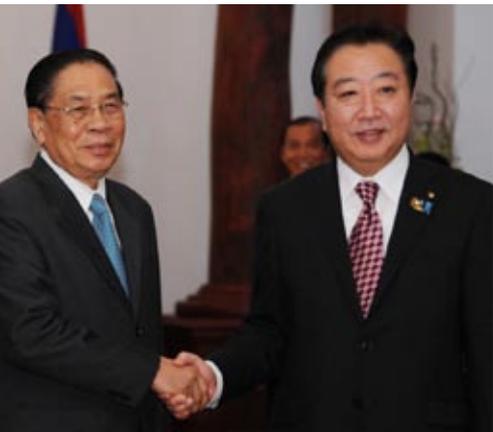


ASEM 9



Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda shakes hands with the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Secretary General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, Mr. Choummaly Sayasone.

On November 5, 2012, the Ninth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM 9) opened in Vientiane, Laos, with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda representing Japan.

At the Meeting, as for economic and financial issues, Prime Minister

Noda expressed his perception of the global economy, saying the European debt crisis was considered the most serious risk factor at present. He first referred to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings which Japan hosted in Tokyo, the expansion of the IMF's financial resources to which Japan pledged its contribution earlier than any other country, and the strengthening of Asia's financial safety network for which Japan showed leadership. He then expressed Japan's determination to contribute to the development of both Europe and Asia by pursuing fiscal consolidation and economic growth at the same time and realizing sustained growth.

As for the future direction of ASEM, Prime Minister Noda said ASEM being the sole forum linking Asia and Europe, discussing matters of interest to both regions and sharing common recognition are important not only for Asia and Europe but also for the peace and stability of the international community.

After the Meeting, the ASEM 9 Chair's Statement and Vientiane Declaration on Strengthening Partnership for Peace and Development were released.

Japan-ASEAN and East Asia Summits

On November 19, 2012, the Fifteenth Japan-ASEAN Summit was held on in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda attended the meeting. At the Summit, Prime Minister Noda emphasized that passing on their experience of the past forty years to the next generation, and building an even closer and deeper Japan-ASEAN relationship towards the future will be extremely important for the region's stability and prosperity.

On November 20, the Seventh East Asia Summit was held. Recognizing the situation in the Asia-Pacific as a region that is going through significant change, Prime Minister Noda opened his statement stressing that the need for frank and strategic discussion among the regional leaders continues to increase. He also noted that, with the new membership of the United States and the Russian Federation since last year, the East Asia Summit has further grown into a significant opportunity to strengthen cooperation on practical issues as well as in security and political areas. He reiterated his strong commitment to developing the EAS into a leaders-led forum that reconfirms common principles and basic rules in the region, and leads to tangible cooperation. HJ



Scene from the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting