

Address by Deputy Chief of Mission Asari at the reception of the 62nd Constitution Day of AALCO

H.E. Professor Dr. Kennedy Gastorn, Secretary-General of AALCO,

Distinguished delegates,

It is a great pleasure for me to speak on this special occasion of commemorating the 62nd Constitution Day of AALCO. Unfortunately, Mr. Masahiro Mikami, President of the 57th Annual Session of AALCO could not join us here today, thus I have the honor of giving the remarks in his place.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Gastorn for his assistance and leadership in organizing the 57th Annual Session held in Tokyo from Oct 8th to 12th. I would also like to thank the members of the AALCO Secretariat, as well as all the distinguished delegates for making the Annual Session a great success.

Japan has always supported AALCO's activities since its inception in 1956 as one of the original members, and this year was especially memorable, as we hosted the 57th Annual Session. Reflecting on this year's Annual Session, allow me to share with you 3 highlights that we thought were significant.

Firstly, we were able to get a high level of commitment from the Japanese government. Prime Minister Abe received a courtesy call from representatives of the participants, while Foreign Minister Kono and Justice Minister Yamashita joined the delegates for the opening session to deliver remarks. The

participation of such high ranking members of government shows the importance Japan attaches to AALCO.

Secondly, we were able to have deep and fruitful discussions throughout the Session. We proposed a new agenda item “Peaceful Settlement of Disputes”, as well as placed emphasis on the item “Law of the Sea”. These topics, as well as other important topics on the agenda, reflected the current interests of AALCO members, and with the deepened discussions, the Session further contributed to making AALCO an important forum to foster understanding in these topics. We also had 3 side events which also enhanced the depth of understanding on various aspects of international law.

Thirdly, we announced that Japan is preparing to launch a new program, starting next year, to support the capacity building of AALCO members in the area of international law. This will consist of training programs for working-level officials to address challenges concerning important international law issues for AALCO members. The launch of this new program was announced both by PM Abe and FM Kono, and we look forward to working together with AALCO in making this program a success.

There is no doubt that AALCO has served as an important forum for promoting the rule of law in Asia and Africa, the two growing regions of the world. I would like to add that the role of AALCO can be strengthened further by working with other international institutions. Dr. Gastorn’s leadership is greatly valued in expanding AALCO’s network of cooperation with other organizations, and Japan will continue to support his effort in this regard.

With the great momentum gained from the success of the 57th Annual Session, Japan will continue to promote the rule of law in the international community, and to further contribute to advancing the role of AALCO as a legal consultative body that brings Asia and Africa together. I look forward to continuing such efforts along with all AALCO members.

Thank you.