

Statement by Ambassador Ishikawa Hiroshi at
the 19th Japan-Singapore Symposium (JSS) – Partnering for Resilience

11 September 2026

Mr. Zhulkarnian Abdul Rahim, Minister of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs of Singapore,

Mr. Onishi Yohei, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,

Mr. Ashok Mirpuri, Head of International Policy & Governance of Temasek

Ambassador Sasae Kenichiro, President of the Japan Institute of International Affairs,

Professor Tommy Koh, Chairman of the NUS Centre for International Law,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honour to give you my remarks here, as this year's Japan-Singapore Symposium will be a particularly memorable one that took place on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relationship between the two countries.

We have just heard insightful remarks from Foreign Minister Motegi and Ambassador Tommy Koh on the significance of SG60. They have extensively covered many points but allow me to add just one point.

We must never take the current excellent Japan-Singapore relationship for granted. Going forward, we must continue to make every effort to nurture and strengthen our relationship, and I am confident that our two countries share a full commitment to continuing our cooperation in this spirit.

Eighty-one years ago, on 12 September 1945, Japanese troops based in Singapore surrendered to the Allied Powers, making the war formally come to an end in Singapore, and marking a significant moment in our history.

Twenty years later, in 1965, Singapore became an independent nation. In this course, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew articulated his vision that Singapore and Japan must overcome the past tragedy, and Singapore must cooperate with Japan for its survival and prosperity.

From that point onward, our two countries began a new chapter in our relationship, gradually building the close and cooperative partnership we enjoy today. I am grateful for the resolute decision taken by Singapore's political leaders, and equally proud that the Japanese business community responded to that vision, engaging actively and contributing to Singapore's development. I believe that reading *The Land of the Rising Sun and the Lion City*, which Ambassador Tommy Koh and I co-edited, will give you a deeper appreciation of how our two countries and peoples have forged this enduring friendship.

We must never forget that today's strong Japan-Singapore relationship has been built upon the sacrifices and efforts of our predecessors. At the same time, as Minister Motegi noted in his message, our two countries and peoples are partners who share fundamental values and principles. This shared outlook is reflected not only in how we approach international issues, such as the South China Sea and the situation in Ukraine, but also in the values our peoples hold dear in everyday life—valuing safety and cleanliness, placing importance on trust and reliability, and respecting rules.

It is precisely because of these shared values that I am confident that our two countries will continue to work together to make this relationship even stronger and more productive in the years ahead.

To mark this year as SJ60, more than 250 commemorative events have been conducted so far across Singapore. As the two climaxes during the rest of the year, the SJ60 flagship event will take place at Marina Bay Sands on 28th and 29th of November, and in the same month, Her Imperial Highness Princess Aiko is set to make a goodwill visit to Singapore.

We remain fully committed to making these initiatives most meaningful, as we continue to build together toward the future.

Thank you for your kind attention. I look forward to a fruitful discussion, and to the continued flourishing of Japan-Singapore relations.