

OPENING REMARKS
AT THE SIXTH REGIONAL SEMINAR ON GOOD GOVERNANCE
FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

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Mr. Katsuyuki Nishikawa, Honourable Vice Minister of the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Kunihiro Sakai, Honourable Director General, Research and Training Institute of the Ministry of Justice, honourable guests, distinguished experts and participants, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to announce the opening of the Sixth Regional Seminar on Good Governance for Southeast Asian Countries, which is a commemorative event of UNAFEI's 50th Anniversary. On behalf of UNAFEI, I would like to extend my heartfelt welcome to the honourable guests, the distinguished speakers and participants who have come to join this significant forum.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Japan for its continued support as the host country of UNAFEI. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to the Japanese Ministry of Justice for their assistance in organizing this Seminar.

The topic to be discussed at this seminar is "International Cooperation: Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition". Corruption disrupts the rule of law. It encourages disregard of human rights, allows criminals to prosper and feeds inequality, injustice and insecurity. In corrupt societies, funds intended for development are often diverted and foreign aid and investment shy away as a result. Thus, this seminar will continue to focus on corruption control as a cornerstone for realizing good governance. In the era of globalization, crimes including corruption are in no way an exception. As the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) devotes a full chapter to international cooperation, effective and efficient international cooperation is a prerequisite for successful control of corruption.

However, despite various efforts made until now, we must admit that we are far behind the criminals in this respect. Amidst issues of state sovereignty; disparity of laws, legal systems and languages; low enforcement priority and lack of financial and other resources—we have much to overcome to facilitate international cooperation. I believe this seminar can be a good opportunity for us to identify the issues and the ways to overcome challenges and to build confidence and trust in each other.

I look forward to seeing this Seminar provide a useful forum to exchange expertise and knowledge in our common endeavour against corruption, contributing further to the promotion of good governance in Southeast Asia.

Thank you very much for your attention.