

Concept Paper on “Trilateral+X” Cooperation

I. Background

China, the Republic of Korea and Japan, have advanced cooperation in a wide range of areas including political, economic, social affairs and sustainable development since the leaders of the three countries first gathered on the margin of ASEAN related Summit Meetings in Manila in 1999. At the 7th Trilateral Summit Meeting in May 2018, the three leaders renewed their commitment to making further efforts towards deepening and broadening cooperation in the region. In this regard, they shared the intention to explore “Trilateral+X” cooperation modality for sustainable regional development.

Given the large number of developing countries in Asia and the acute problem of uneven and inadequate development Asia faces, it is imperative to explore new areas and models to improve trilateral cooperation, building upon the positive development so far achieved as confirmed at the 7th Trilateral Summit Meeting. The “Trilateral+X” modality is worth exploring particularly in those fields where the three countries possess many successful experiences and know-how to share with other countries.

II. Goal

Building mutual understanding among the three countries, promoting trilateral cooperation, and harnessing mutual complementarity in a joint effort to promote sustainable common development in the region and beyond.

III. Principles

- i. *Voluntary*. Cooperation programs will be demand-based from recipient partner countries and implemented through full communication on a voluntary basis.
- ii. *Equal-footed*. Models of cooperation will be jointly decided among the three

countries and recipient countries for shared benefits.

iii. *Open*. Cooperation will be open to other countries and regions beyond the three countries and to new areas and models.

iv. *Win-win*. Cooperation will be conducted through joint participation for mutual benefit, common development, and win-win outcomes.

v. *Transparent*. Cooperation will be conducted in a transparent manner for the people in the three countries and beyond.

vi. *Sustainable*. Cooperation programs will be sustainable with due considerations for the environment and economic efficiency.

IV. Major cooperation areas

i. Sustainable Economy.

Building on their respective economic advantages, the three countries may explore ways to promote common development in the region and beyond.

ii. Ecological and Environmental Conservation.

The three countries have conducted close and effective cooperation in the field of environment, and will continue to play an important role in promoting regional and international cooperation on environment including marine plastic litter, biodiversity, air pollution and climate change.

iii. Disaster Risk Reduction.

As disaster-prone countries, the three countries have rich experiences and advanced technologies in disaster risk reduction. They may explore ways to help regional countries to improve disaster prevention, reduction and relief capability as well as to increase public education and awareness about disaster risk reduction.

iv. Health.

Through extensive, practical exchanges, the three countries have laid a solid foundation for cooperation on infectious diseases and aging. Building on existing cooperation, they may explore cooperation with other countries in this field.

v. Poverty Alleviation.

The three countries have been active in sharing their poverty alleviation experiences

with regional countries as reflected in China's "East Asia Poverty Alleviation Initiative", Japan's poverty reduction cooperation through micro-finance and the ROK's "3P's (People, Peace and Prosperity) policy" based on actual needs of partner countries, and they may explore cooperation with other countries in this field.

vi. People-to-People Exchange.

The governments of the three countries and the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat have been hosting varieties of people-to-people, cultural and educational exchange programs in order to deepen mutual understanding and trust among the peoples. Building upon those experiences, they may explore cooperation with other countries.

vii. Other Areas.

The three countries share the intention to explore the "Trilateral+X" modality in other areas as appropriate.

V. Implementation Approach

Models and projects of cooperation will be explored and decided by the line agencies of the three countries in coordination with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs through dialogue and consultation. If necessary, joint workshops, personnel exchanges and training could be held.

The Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) will also play a role, as appropriate, in exploring and conducting "Trilateral+X" cooperation projects in the future.

VI. Timeline

- i. Distributing the Concept Paper to interested countries at an appropriate timing.
- ii. Working towards identifying the early harvest projects at the 8th Trilateral Summit.