

Mexico | Mexico National Day Special

130 years 'full of affinities' between two ancient cultures

Carlos Almada
AMBASSADOR OF MEXICO



Although contact between Mexico and Japan goes back more than four centuries, the modern relations between the two countries began on Nov. 30, 1888, with the signature of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation. This year, we commemorate the 130th anniversary of that symbolic date for both nations. For Japan, it was the first treaty signed under conditions of absolute equality with a Western nation, helping Tokyo to renegotiate unequal treaties signed with other nations. For Mexico, it was the first one signed with an Asian country, marking the beginning of a policy of regional diversification that, up to this day, continues to be one of the pillars of Mexican foreign policy.

This treaty is part of a history full of affinities and supportive interaction between two ancient cultures, which has given place to the development of a true friendship. Throughout the years, there have been multiple times in which Mexico and Japan have lent a hand to each other. The more recent examples are the support given by Mexico after the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami in 2011, and the help provided by Japan after the Mexico City earthquake in 2017. Besides being close friends, Mexico and Japan are also strategic global partners. We have an intense, political dialogue at all levels and share values and positions in multilateral forums. The strategic association between Mexico and Japan covers outstanding global issues such

as international peace and security, climate change and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, among others. This partnership has allowed us to expand our dialogue and cooperation in forums such as the United Nations, Group of 20, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

The economic relations between the two countries keep growing at a very fast pace. In 2004, Japan was the first Asian country with which Mexico signed an economic partnership agreement. Since then, the number of Japanese companies in Mexico has increased dramatically; today, there are more than 1,200. Mexico is Japan's main trading partner in Latin America, while Japan is our main investor from Asia and our fourth-largest trading partner worldwide. Japanese investment has contributed to make Mexico the seventh-largest automotive manufacturer in the world, the fourth-largest global car exporter and No. 1 in Latin America. Furthermore, a few months ago, Mexico and Japan signed in Chile, along with other countries, the CPTPP, which opens new horizons and opportunities to advance and deepen multilateral ties.

Mexico and Japan have been closely collaborating in other areas as well. The Human Resources Training Program of the Global Strategic Association, for instance, has benefited thousands of trainees in both countries. Every year, hundreds of students from Mexico and Japan participate in academic exchanges (language learning, technical specialization and research stays). Likewise, more than 100 agreements between universities of both countries have been signed. As a

result of the triple helix cooperation, there have been three Mexico-Japan Rectors' Summits; with the last one celebrated in Hiroshima in Nov. 2017 and the next taking place in Mexico City in 2019. Relations between Mexico and Japan have developed a new, dynamic and strategic meaning — we are close partners, allies and friends. We mutually benefit from existing cooperation, not just in commerce and investment, but

also in scientific collaboration, political dialogue and cultural and academic exchanges. As we commemorate the 130th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, I would like to seize this moment of celebration to express, on behalf of the government and people of Mexico, my best wishes for a further deepening and strengthening of the ties between Mexico and Japan.

Pursuing a free, open global market

Shinya Katanozaka
CHAIR, JAPAN-MEXICO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, VICE CHAIR, KEIDANREN



Representing the Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren, I am sending my sincerest greetings and congratulations on the Independence Day of Mexico.

Japan and Mexico's bilateral relations go back for 130 years. They started in 1888, when Japan concluded the first equal treaty signed with a country outside of Asia, namely the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation between Japan and Mexico. In recent years, specifically after the conclusion of the economic partnership agreement between Japan and Mexico in 2005, trade volume has more than doubled between the two countries. The number of corporations having operations in Mexico has doubled in these five years, total-

ing more than 1,200. Mexico has become the strategic focal point for Japan's manufacturing industry's position in North American markets. With protectionism rising high in global trade, the two countries need now, more than ever, to cooperate closely to keep the world economic order open and free. The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement that was signed in March by 11 countries, including Mexico and Japan, contributes to the member countries in the area for its long-term growth, and its coming into effect is strongly anticipated. At the same time, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has become an important legal base of Japan's corporate activities in the three North American markets, and crucial for their further development. Japan is closely watching the ongoing NAFTA talks.

The Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren will become even more active in developing Japan-Mexico relations and contributing to making the ties between the two countries stronger. We humbly ask for your advice, support and cooperation.



Congratulations on
the Independence Day
of Mexico

Yoshikazu Morita
Yoshikazu Morita

Kyoto University of Foreign Studies
Chancellor and Chair of the Board
of Governors
Honorary Consul of Mexico
Honorary Consul-General of Nicaragua

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Mexico and the 130th
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Outlook bright for relations

Hirofumi Nakasone
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MEXICO
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE



On the auspicious occasion of the 208th Anniversary of Mexico's Independence, I'd like to convey my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Mexico on behalf of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship League.

This year marks the 130th anniversary since Japan and Mexico signed the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation in 1888. This treaty was one of the first treaties written under complete equitable terms for Japan. For Mexico, this treaty symbolized the first step of establishing diplomatic relationships with Asian countries. In this commemorative year, it is most gratifying that the two countries maintain frequent high-level exchanges such as the visits of Foreign Minister Taro Kono in May and August.

Today, bilateral relations have been closer in a variety of fields such as politics, economy and culture. Particularly, the bilateral economic relations have been expanded more than ever before on the basis of the economic partnership agreement since its entry into

force in 2005. Today, there are more than 1,200 Japanese companies investing in Mexico, the largest number in Latin America. In addition, both countries, having completed their domestic procedures of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, are working together toward its early entry into force and expansion. The two sides also collaborate with each other to cope with global issues in the international area.

This year is also a milestone for the Mexican people as the presidential election, coming around every six years, was held on July 1 and the new government is going to be installed on Dec. 1. First of all, I congratulate the Mexican people on taking a new step with the President-elect, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. Secondly, I am strongly convinced that the friendly relationship will always be tied with the next administration.

Japan and Mexico are strategic global partners sharing fundamental values such as liberty, democracy, the rule of law and human rights based on historically friendly relations over 400 years. Let me conclude by reiterating my hope for the further promotion of our bilateral relations as the president of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship League.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



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and the 130th Anniversary of
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