

# Lithuania National Day Special

## Celebrating bilateral relations, paying tribute to Chiune Sugihara

**GEDIMINAS VARVUOLIS**  
AMBASSADOR OF LITHUANIA



On the occasion of the Day of Restoration of the State of Lithuania I am honored to extend, on behalf of Lithuanian people and authorities, our warmest regards to Their

Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, the imperial family, government and people of Japan, as well as our fellow compatriots living here.

Feb. 16, 1918, was a decisive point in the modern history of Lithuania — our coun-

try became a sovereign state again. Diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Japan were established in December 1922 and restored in 1991 after we regained our independence. Lithuania and Japan have been enjoying close bilateral relations ever since and we hope that on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of their resumption in 2021, as well as their centenary in 2022, we will be able to showcase in Japan the best of what Lithuania can offer in the area of culture.

The past year was rich in bilateral moments as 2020 was declared by the Lithuanian parliament the year of Chiune Sugihara to honor the 80th anniversary of “visas for life,” and the 120th anniversary of his birth. In 1940, guided by his conscience, Sugihara made the brave decision

to issue transit visas to Jewish war refugees stranded in Lithuania at the outbreak of World War II, saving thousands of human lives from the Holocaust. International conferences both in Lithuania and Japan, as well as other memorable events attended by officials of both countries, took place on that occasion.

This year, our athletes are looking forward to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are grateful to the host towns of the Lithuanian Olympic and Paralympic teams, Hiratsuka and Toyohashi, for their continuous support. Close friendship links and long-standing cooperation also connect Lithuania with Gifu, Yaotsu, Kuji, Tsuruga, Nagoya and other places in Japan where the name of Lithuania resonates and people share their love for our country.

Lithuania-Japan business cooperation also enjoys a solid growth and is based on exports of such iconic Lithuanian products as lasers, food, amber and linen. Moreover, we have recently been expanding our horizons with new Japanese investments in Lithuanian technologies. The urban delivery start-up Ziticity and smart mobility start-up Trafi received the attention of major capital investors of Japan. Joint research in the fields of energy and life sciences also brings us together for the common goals of climate action and healthy lives.

On this solemn occasion, let me express my sincere gratitude to all friends of Lithuania in Japan and wish that close friendship between our countries and nations will continue to flourish.



Sugihara House in Kaunas LITHUANIA TRAVEL



Gediminas Tower, a Lithuanian landmark, stands in Vilnius' Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site. LAIMONAS CIUNYS

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

### Congratulations to the People of Lithuania on the Occasion of Their National Day



Port of Humanity Tsuruga Museum  
The museum preserves documents of Jewish refugees that came to Tsuruga.

<https://tsuruga-museum.jp/>

City of Tsuruga

*Congratulations  
to the People of the Republic of Lithuania  
on the Anniversary of Their National Day*



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*Congratulations to the People of the  
Republic of Lithuania on the Restoration  
of Independence Day*

おめでとうございます。

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