

Canada Day Special

A new chapter in long-standing ties

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On this 154th anniversary of Canadian confederation, I look forward to beginning my new assignment as Canada's ambassador to Japan. I am eager to build on the many strengths of the Canada-Japan

relationship, and to advance our shared interests and priorities as we look ahead to new opportunities.

Canada and Japan are natural partners, with common values and priorities that shape our vision for the future. In May, we announced six shared priorities in the Indo-Pacific region, including rule of law, security, health, free trade promotion, energy, and environment and climate change. This new framework will be the cornerstone of Canada-Japan regional cooperation going forward.

There can be no greater issue of agreed

importance than the health of our planet. By working together in bilateral and multilateral fora, Canada and Japan can lead the way in developing means to reduce emissions, drive clean growth, build resilience and protect the environment. We are already cooperating on efforts to decarbonize our economies in a way that will not stifle growth, but rather lead to a cleaner and more prosperous future.

Key to continued mutual economic prosperity is the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, which underscores our shared commitment to rules-based trade and is creating new innovation partnerships and trade and investment opportunities in both Canada and Japan. Our commercial links are substantial and taking on added importance as we respond to the economic impact of COVID-19. Canada has long been a key economic partner for Japan, and greatly benefits from the prominent role Japanese investment and companies play in the Canadian economy.

We are also working with Japan to address common advocacy objectives, especially in the areas of diversity and inclusion, building

greater awareness around LGBTQ rights, and the empowerment of women and girls. We take pride in showcasing Canada's core values in all our activities. As travel restrictions are lifted, we are eager for renewed opportunities to advance these themes, including through increased exchange in cultural industries, tourism, study programs, and linkages with academic institutions.

Canada looks forward to the upcoming Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. The government of Canada is committed to creating an environment where all Canadians can safely engage in sports, regardless of age, ability, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. Our Olympic and Paralympic athletes are dedicated to the pursuit of sporting excellence. Many of them have already gained tremendously from practice at Japan's preliminary training camps and interactions with host towns, both of which are an important part of our broader Canada network in Japan that also includes the valuable ongoing contributions of sister cities and friendship associations.

The steady partnership that Canada and



Rideau Canal, Ottawa GETTY IMAGES

Japan have built is rooted in shared values — respect for human rights, democracy, rule of law, open markets and a clean environment — with a strong commitment to the global institutions that underpin these ideals. The friendships that we enjoy are steadfast, multifaceted and continue to flourish.

Looking ahead, I see great potential for even stronger Canada-Japan ties through regional cooperation; a focus on environmental stewardship; engaging and inspiring youth; expanding trade and investment opportunities; as well as celebrating our diversity and encouraging inclusion in all that we do.

Ian G. McKay has been appointed Canada's next ambassador to Japan.

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

Happy Canada Day

Congratulations

to the People of Canada

on the Anniversary of

the Canadian Confederation

 Mitsubishi Corporation