

Mexico independence day

Successful partnership yields results in all fields

Claude Heller
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE OF
MEXICO

As the newly arrived ambassador of my country, it is a special honor to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 201st anniversary of the independence of Mexico. I have the privilege to extend, on behalf of President Felipe Calderon and the Mexican people, my sincere greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial Family, and the government and the people of Japan, as well as a message of solidarity with regard to the damage and losses caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake.



Mexico and Japan share a long history of friendship that goes back to 1609. At the same time, we recognize each other as strategic partners that share common interests and values, such as democracy, human rights and the respect for the rule of law.

Frequent meetings between our leaders have led to an unprecedented bilateral and multi-lateral dialogue on a wide range of issues, including climate change, human security, nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. The importance that Mexico grants to the bilateral relation was clearly seen during the three visits that President Calderon has conducted to Japan. The political dialogue has also been strengthened by constant parliamentary exchanges. As Mexico will host the Group of Twenty (G-20) Summit in 2012, Mexico looks forward to further cooperation

with Japan in different issues that are relevant to the international community.

We also share a successful economic partnership agreement (EPA). As a result, bilateral trade reached \$9.6 billion in the first half of the year. Japanese companies have announced investments in Mexico for more than \$1.4 billion, attracted by a stable and growing economy, an educated and young population, and a strong domestic market. By the end of 2011, Japanese investment will have reached around \$10 billion since the EPA began six years ago, including participation in procurement projects. Mexican enterprises have also opened offices and began to invest in Japan. I am convinced that the bilateral EPA still offers many opportunities to increase our economic exchanges and to



Leading role: President Felipe Calderon speaks at the U.N. climate change conference in Cancun, Mexico, in 2010. MEXICAN EMBASSY

promote investment in both countries.

The first Japan-Mexico Rectors' Summit, held in Tokyo in June, established the basis to create a bilateral scientific and academic community, and to develop specific programs of cooperation and exchange. We will continue working to make science and technol-

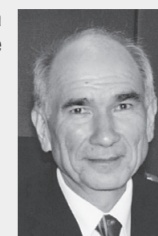
ogy an important pillar of our bilateral relations.

The relations between Mexico and Japan have developed a new dynamic and a strategic meaning. Both countries are closer than ever, ready to continue seizing the opportunities and expanding the potential that our intense exchanges offer in all fields.

Bilateral ties create atmosphere of trust, friendship

Francisco Mayorga
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, RURAL
DEVELOPMENT, FISHERIES AND FOOD

The month of September has a great and particular importance for my country as we celebrate our national holidays, where our people commemorate our independence and national identity, while rediscovering and appreciating our history and traditions.



I would like to share the joy of these holidays with the people of Japan because you share with Mexico a great sense of national identity, with a strong ancestral heritage preserved through the years.

Mexico and Japan share a long history of friendship, which just last year celebrated its first 400 years, a time in which we have developed a harmonious bilateral relationship with broad benefits for our citizens. Particularly, we can highlight successful projects in technical and scientific cooperation, as well as the management and conservation of genetic resources for agriculture, and a strong and vibrant trade relationship.

Nowadays, it is possible for Japanese consumers to have on their table Mexican products, such as chicken, pork, avocados, tequila, mangoes, among many others, all of which share a common feature, as all of them are also part of our traditional national cuisine, proudly declared as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

The economic partnership agreement (EPA) that was signed by our countries, and entered into force on April 1, 2005, has been a key factor in fostering the growth of our relationship, as it has created new trade and investment

opportunities. With regards to trade, our relationship has grown steadily, as exports from the agricultural and food sector of Mexico went from \$557 million the year the EPA was signed, to \$730 million in 2010. This growth is continuing in 2011, as shown by the fact that during the first semester of 2011, our exports of agricultural products to Japan have increased by 27 percent. This is a good moment to express our gratitude to Japanese consumers, who demand quality food products that are safe for their families.

Regarding technical cooperation, we have completed important agreements in the agricultural sector, among which we can mention two particular projects: one with the University of Tsukuba for the exchange of researchers, experts and technical assistance for the management of the National Center for Genetic Resources of Mexico, located in the community of Tepetitlan, in the western state of Jalisco; and another project with the University of Toritto, for the genetic improvement of the genus *Jatropha*.

Nevertheless, the most important success in our bilateral relationship has been in creating an atmosphere of trust, friendship and partnership between Japan and Mexico.

The admiration that the people of Mexico profess for the people of Japan is reflected in the deep solidarity that we feel regarding the natural disaster that struck this year, greatly affecting thousands of families in Japan.

I wish to reiterate my solidarity with the people of Japan and convey heartfelt expressions of sympathy from the people of Mexico. We are certain that Japan will overcome these difficult times, as it has done in the past, and will show the world what can be achieved through the determination of such a hardworking people. With my sincere admiration and respect, I send you my best regards.

Growth in trade, investments benefits both countries

Bruno Ferrari
ECONOMY SECRETARY

Mexico and Japan continue to foster their economic relationship by expanding commerce and investment. In 2010, bilateral trade registered \$18.5 billion, and this year it may top \$21 billion, marking a new record. Sales of Mexico's agricultural products to Japan during the first semester of 2011 expanded to \$439 million, a 28.4 percent increase over the same period last year. Overall, Mexican exports to the Japanese market reached \$2 billion to June this year.



important suppliers of agricultural products, such as mangoes, avocados, melons, pork, sardines and "cabocha" pumpkins; and, it is one of the main suppliers of industrial products such as salt, fluorite, cellulose, silver, car seats, remote control devices and electric shavers.

The successful economic relationship between our two countries is anchored on the Mexico-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which came into effect in 2005, to the benefit of producers, consumers, and exporters alike.

The EPA has also promoted Japanese investments in Mexico, particularly in the automotive sector. Almost \$6 billion in cumulative investments by Japanese firms have been announced in Mexico since 2005.



Investment: Mexican President Felipe Calderon meets with Ken Kobayashi, president and CEO of Mitsubishi Corp., on Aug. 2 in Mexico City. MEXICAN EMBASSY

Some of the most attractive sectors for Japanese firms are infrastructure-related projects, automotive and auto parts, and electronics.

Currently, there are over 470 Japanese firms operating in Mexico in sectors ranging from automotive to food processing and energy-related infrastructure.

Japanese car companies, such as Nissan, Honda and Toyota, export Mexican-made automobiles to more than 70 countries around the world. Companies in the clean-energy industry are looking for opportunities in new projects, including wind, solar and thermal power.

In June, Mazda announced a \$500 million investment to produce up to 140,000 vehicles in Mexico starting in 2013. In August, Honda also announced the construction of a new automobile plant in Mexico — its second in the country — with an initial investment of \$800 million, that will produce 200,000 vehicles per year for the Mexican and North American markets.

Most importantly, the presence of Japanese automakers has led to the arrival of dozens

of Japanese auto-parts suppliers to set up production facilities in Mexico. Those auto suppliers, along with several dozen Mexican firms, are creating the most important supply base for car production in North America.

In February, more than 250 businessmen and women from Japan and Mexico gathered in Mexico City for the 29th meeting of the Mexico-Japan Business Committee. The large gathering sponsored by the Mexican Council for Foreign Trade (COMCE) and the Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), underscored the importance

of identifying new business opportunities through trade and investment.

During this meeting, Mexican President Felipe Calderon highlighted the growing importance of Japanese investments in Mexico and expressed his satisfaction with the growth of trade in both directions. The president also commented on how the deregulating process that Mexico has undertaken has led our country to improve its standing in the World Bank's 2011 Doing Business Report.

Finally, I would like to refer to the tragedy that struck Japan on

March 11, causing losses of life and property. The Mexican people joined their brothers and sisters of Japan in this time of deep sorrow. Despite the enormous difficulties, we are confident that Japan will fully recover, as it has done in the past from previous disasters. There are important lessons to be drawn from this tragedy, not only in Japan, but in Mexico and the whole world as well. We in Mexico are confident that the Japanese people, its industries and its culture will continue to thrive and exert their positive influence for the benefit of humankind.

Continuing to enhance, deepen economic relations with Mexico

Iitaru Koeda
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-MEXICO
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE OF
KEIDANREN

On behalf of the Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren (Japan Business Federation),

I would like to congratulate Mexico on the occasion of the anniversary of its independence, and express my best wishes for the health and prosperity of H.E. President Felipe Calderon, and the people of Mexico.

In the aftermath of the disaster that struck Japan on March 11, the Mexican government and people sent their condolences and provided great assistance to Japan, including the dispatch of a 12-party rescue team and the provision of food, water and health supplies. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for this support, which gave the Japanese people courage and propelled us to take steps toward reconstruction and re-



Assistance: A search and rescue team, including five search dogs, is dispatched by Mexico in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami in March. MEXICAN EMBASSY

covery. In order to sustain the reconstruction efforts, the Japanese business community stands firm in its intentions to maintain and keep up external economic activities, and to continue fulfilling Japan's responsibilities in the global economy. In particular, we will continue to place a strong focus on maintaining the relations we have enjoyed with Mexico thus far.

Over a span of 50 years, since 1961, Keidanren has kept up exchanges with the Mexican

business community. In February this year, the 29th meeting of the Mexico-Japan Business Committee meeting was held in Mexico City. President Calderon, who graced the event with his presence, commented that Japan, which possesses advanced technology, and Mexico, with its rich labor force, enjoy a mutually complementary economic relationship, and that growth opportunities for both countries are expanding further with the

Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The two countries also arrived at a substantial agreement on the day prior to the meeting with regard to the review of the EPA, which had come into effect in April 2005. The two governments gave reports on the contents of the review at the meeting, contributing to a fulfilling event. Keidanren will continue to put in its utmost efforts to enhance and deepen the economic relations between the two countries.

Upon learning of the heart-warming support in the form of grassroots charity activities proffered by the people of Mexico to Japanese victims in the aftermath of the recent earthquake disaster, I realized anew that the friendship between the people of Japan and Mexico, built up over more than 400 years of exchanges between the two countries, has become deeply rooted among the people. Against the background of this history, I look forward to the continued growth for the future in all forms of economic and cultural exchanges between our two countries as true allies.

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Mexico independence day / world

Promoting multiple exchanges to create a renewed dynamism

Hidenao Nakagawa
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MEXICO
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP
FEDERATION

It is a great pleasure for me, as president of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation, to express my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Mexico on the 201st anniversary of their independence.



Japan and Mexico share a long history of friendship, trust and cooperation. Our first encounter goes back to 1609, when the inhabitants of Onjuku, in present-day Chiba Prefecture, rescued the crew of the galleon San Francisco, which was shipwrecked on its way to New Spain, present-day Mexico. From that time it became evident that there is a mutual attraction between the peoples of both nations that have led to multiple personal, cultural and social exchanges. I believe both countries should further promote them as a key element to deepen our understanding and to learn from the other.

Our relations have experienced a renewed dynamism. Both countries now look at each other as strategic partners willing to work together on issues such as international peace and

security, nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, climate change, among others, and to promote economic growth. This cooperation has been evident in the United Nations and in other international forums, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Group of Twenty, the 2012 summit of which will be hosted by Mexico.

The Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement has allowed bilateral trade and investment to notably increase since its entry into force six years ago. Last February, both countries agreed on the improvement of market access under the EPA. More trade between our countries means more well-being for our people. Therefore, it is important that both countries implement the agreements reached as soon as possible to allow their private sectors to take immediate advantage of them. Investment also continues to grow between Japan and Mexico. For instance, companies like Honda and Mazda have recently announced new investments in Mexico, while Mexichem has done so in Hiroshima and Kawasaki.

The Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation shares the joy that Mexico experiences in another anniversary of its independence. We are committed to continue supporting the exchanges between both countries and to further strengthen the bilateral partnership.



One-of-a-kind: Traditional Mexican cuisine is an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as deemed by UNESCO. MEXICAN EMBASSY

The time to visit Mexico is now

Gloria Guevara
SECRETARY OF TOURISM

It is a pleasure for me to invite you to visit Mexico, a unique, diverse and hospitable country.

Mexico is among the top 10 tourism destinations in the world. Mexico receives more than 22 million tourists each year who come to enjoy our great historical and cultural richness. Mexico also hosts more than 80,000 Japanese tourists annually. Within the Asia, Japan is the largest emissary of tourists to Mexico.



Mexico's natural, patrimonial and cultural resources place us in a privileged position in the world, in terms of tourism. Our gastronomy was the first in the world to have been named an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Our history of more than 3,000 years is a legacy from indigenous civilizations, European influences, and the centennial linkages with Japan and the Asia-Pacific region.

Mexico has more than 40,000 archaeological sites, like the Mayan city of Chichen Itza, one of the "new seven wonders of the world," and Teotihuacan. The country boasts 37 World Heritage sites as declared by UNESCO.

You will also find beautiful sunny beaches, as well as a great variety of flora and fauna, including one of the planet's greatest reefs.

Since this year, the Mayan World is celebrating 2012, a year according to their ancient calendar of rebirth and renovation. Five cities and 10 archaeological Mayan icons in the south of Mexico will welcome tourists from all over the world to experience them as architectural witnesses of a civilization that is still alive during a fascinating moment in Mayan cosmogony. This celebration is an excellent opportunity for you to visit our country, which relies on a human diversity of 62 ethnic groups.

Japan and Mexico keep growing closer, not only because of the Japanese tourists who favor us, with their visits every year to enjoy the warmth and hospitality of our people, but also because of the traditions and art from Asia that continue to be present in our streets in a fraternal atmosphere.

Friendship between our nations is more than 400 years old. We also share with you the vision of sustainability and respect for the environment.

Therefore, we invite you to visit Mexico, to bear witness to the culture, traditions and beauty of our country.

Welcome to Mexico!

Congratulations

on the Independence Day of Mexico



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