

Mexico independence day

Promoting a future-oriented relationship with Japan

Claude Heller
AMBASSADOR OF MEXICO

It is a special honor to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 202nd anniversary of the independence of Mexico and to convey sincere greetings, on behalf of the government and people of Mexico, to His Imperial Highness Emperor Akihito, the Imperial family, and the government and people of Japan.

The relations between Mexico and Japan have grown stronger over the last year as we continued developing the global strategic partnership agreed upon in 2010. Both countries maintained their regular and fluid dialogue on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues, including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change, disaster prevention and aspects related to the development agenda in the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

Mexico successfully hosted the G-20 Summit in June 2012, in Los Cabos, Baja California Sur. Openness, transparency and inclusiveness were the main characteristics of the Group of 20 process led by the Mexican Presidency, which confirmed the commitment of Mexico to play a constructive role and to build the necessary bridges to face the most pressing global challenges. Mexico and Japan kept also a close dialogue during this process. The Los Cabos Summit was also an opportunity to continue with the high-level bilateral dialogue as seen during the meeting between the leaders of both countries on June 17.

The bilateral trade continues to expand notably thanks to the economic partnership agreement (EPA) that began seven years ago and that has proved to be a successful tool to increase our economic exchanges. As a result, bilateral trade set a new record of \$20.5 billion in 2011. During the first half of 2012 it already reached \$10.6 billion. Japanese companies have an-



World leaders: The summit meeting of the Group of 20 is held in Los Cabos, Mexico, in June. G20 MEXICO

nounced investments in Mexico for more than \$13 billion since 2005 in sectors such as automotive and auto parts, electronics, metallurgical, machinery, agribusiness, food processing and high technology manufacturing. Both countries also continue

to work in expanding their exchanges in science and technology, and in the academic field. In this regard, Mexico and Japan commemorated this year the 40th anniversary of the Cooperation Program for Human Resources Development first

generation. This program, sponsored by the Mexican Science and Technology Council and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, has benefited more than 4,000 students and trainees from both countries through scholarships.

In addition to their traditional friendship and commitment in favor of peace and nuclear disarmament, Mexico and Hiroshima are developing increasing economic, cultural and educational exchanges. Mexico decided to establish an Honorary Consulate in Hiroshima that will formally start operating from Sept. 18, in order to further expand this relationship.

Mexico and Japan have shown solidarity to each other during the occurrence of national disasters. The events of March 11, 2011, deeply move every Mexican as we remembered the Japanese solidarity in our own difficult circumstances, and because of the deep friendship, sympathy

and admiration that exist among the people from both countries.

In particular, Mexico has taken a keen interest in expressing its solidarity to the children of the Tohoku region. This summer a group of 22 children from the city of Soma, Fukushima, were invited to visit Mexico with the support of different governmental and private entities. An entertaining cultural program, which introduced them to Mexico's history, its culinary traditions and the way of life of Mexican children their same age, was specially prepared for these young guests. Also, previous to their participation at the Under-20 Women's World Cup that was held in Japan, the Mexican soccer team welcomed the visit of a group of children from Miyagi Prefecture and their families.

In July, general elections were held in Mexico in a democratic and peaceful manner. As a result, a new Congress began its work on Sept. 1 and a new gov-



Symbol: Mexico's national flag is a vertical tricolor of green, white and red with a coat of arms, which depicts a Mexican golden eagle perched on a prickly pear cactus devouring a snake. PROMEXICO



Democracy in action: President Felipe Calderón (right) hosts President-elect Enrique Peña Nieto for a working meeting on Sept. 5 at Los Pinos, the official presidential office and residence in Mexico City. OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO

ernment will be inaugurated on Dec. 1 under the leadership of President-elect Enrique Peña Nieto. There is a strong esteem among all the political forces in Mexico toward Japan. At the same time, there is shared consensus about the importance of deepening the strategic relations

between both countries. In these respects, Mexico is looking forward to continue working with Japan with a future-oriented vision in order to strengthen a relation that benefits both countries, as well as to widen the bilateral exchanges in all fields.

Recent developments bring our nations even closer in bilateral partnership

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 202nd anniversary of their independence.

The Japan-Mexico relation is based on friendship and trust. At the same time, there is a notable affinity between the peoples of both nations that have led to multiple personal, cultural and social exchanges. Recent developments such as the establishment of an Honorary



Consulate of Mexico in Hiroshima will bring our nations even closer.

At the same time, the relation has developed a solid foundation as result of the global strategic partnership agreed upon in 2010, the Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement that is already in its seventh year, and the notable exchange program that allows people from both countries to enhance their skills and mutual knowledge. This framework offers a privileged avenue to further advance our relation in the 21st century.

Parliamentary exchanges are also an important element of the political dialogue between Japan and Mexico. Last January, we received the visit of a Mexican delegation, headed by the president of the Mexican Senate, to participate at the 20th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific

Parliamentary Forum held in Tokyo.

A bilateral meeting between parliamentarians from both countries was held at the margins of that forum that confirmed our coincidences on different issues of the global agenda and that we uphold common values. We look forward to working with the new members of the Mexican Congress to further enhance these exchanges.

The Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation shares the joy that Mexico experiences in another anniversary of its independence. I would like to express, on behalf of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation, our enduring commitment to continue supporting the relation between both countries and to further strengthen the bilateral partnership.

Mexico offers many unique tourist attractions

Mexico ranks among the top 10 tourism destinations in the world, receiving more than 22 million visitors each year who come to enjoy our great historical and cultural richness and unique experiences. Mexico hosts more than 90,000 Japanese tourists annually. Within the Asian continent, Japan is the largest emissary of tourists to Mexico, representing a market share of 45 percent within Asia.

This increasing interest of the Japanese visitors to Mexico is mainly due to Mexico's unique Cultural Heritage, recognized by UNESCO as one of the richest of the world. Thus, Mexico is the country with the third largest number of cities that have been declared heritage sites, and the sixth in the world regarding the overall number of these sites.

Through 2012, the Maya world has been celebrating a year that, according to their ancient calendar, is of rebirth and renovation. Five cities and 10 Maya archeological sites in the southeast part of Mexico will welcome tourists from Japan and all over the world to have a unique experience, and to witness an important moment in



World wonder: Located in the Mexican state of Yucatan, Chichen Itza is a large pre-Hispanic city built by the Maya civilization, which is celebrating a year of rebirth and renovation in 2012, according to the ancient Maya calendar. CMPT

history, surrounded with the echoes and magic of the Maya civilization.

No matter what you are seeking, Mexico offers a variety of experiences difficult to match anywhere. Where else can you climb a pyramid in the morn-

ing, snorkel in a turquoise sea before lunch, shop for exquisite crafts in the evening, dine on authentic Mexican cuisine, taste an excellent cabernet sauvignon or a tequila and dance until dawn? Mexico offers destinations and activities ranging from romance,

and ecotourism, to golf, gastronomy and culture. Naturally, these destinations are all characterized by the friendliness, excellent service, and Mexico's hospitality that have deservedly earned international recognition.

Welcome to Mexico!

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on the Independence Day
of Mexico



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Mexico independence day



Friendly ties: Mexican Ambassador Claude Heller (center) joins hands with Itaru Koeda (left) and Hidenao Nakagawa during an award ceremony to bestow the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle on June 26 at the embassy in Tokyo. EMBASSY OF MEXICO

Shared values should further collaborations

Itaru Koeda
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-MEXICO
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, 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 the people of the United Mexican States. I would also like to add that for those of us involved with business in Mexico, it was tremendously pleasing to hear the news last month that the Mexican men's soccer team had won its first ever gold medal at the London Olympics.



Turning my attention to the global economy, the effects of the European debt crisis do not allow us to take an optimistic view on the future. In the midst of this situation, at the G-20 Summit in Los Cabos this year, under the leadership of Mexican President Felipe Calderón, the Group of 20, which includes Japan, expressed a strong commitment to open trade and investment, expanding markets and resisting protectionism. Building on this common effort, I believe that Japan and Mexico, which share the values of

the free market and democracy, should further bolster collaborations for the stabilization of the global economy and enhancement of growth.

Just as President Calderón remarked that, in international trade, both states are the winners, following the entry into force of the Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the number of trade transactions between our two countries have increased dramatically, and a number of Japanese companies, especially automobile manufacturers, have begun construction of new factories in Mexico one after another. We have seen a tremendous success in the economic relations of our two countries. Through these kinds of successes, Japan and Mexico should continue to send a message to the international community that free trade will contribute to the expansion of bilateral economic relations. Japanese companies will exert efforts to further deepen and expand bilateral economic relations by actively utilizing the protocol amending the EPA, which took effect in April this year.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere hope that, based on the friendly relations between Japan and Mexico, our two countries will enjoy further prosperity and make contributions to peace and development throughout the world.



Industrial cooperation: Japanese automakers, such as Honda, Mazda and Nissan, have made strong investments in Mexico's automotive industry and continue to expand their production facilities in the country. PROMEXICO

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