

Spanish prime minister's visit

Reinforcing relations with Japan while developing new initiatives

Miguel Navarro
AMBASSADOR OF SPAIN

Spain and Japan relations have a long history. We are celebrating a Dual Year (2013-2014) to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Keicho Embassy, which was sent to Spain by the Daimyo of Sendai Date Masamune in 1613 to propose a commercial treaty to the King of Spain Phillip III. This was the first Japanese diplomatic mission ever sent to the Western world. After an epic navigation crossing the Pacific



and the Atlantic Oceans under the command of the samurai Hasekura Tsunenaga, this long journey led to the first political encounter between the Spanish Habsburg empire and the Japanese empire and the first official visit by an envoy from Japan to the Holy See.

The Dual Year counts with the High Patronage of our two Crown Princes. H.I.H. Crown Prince Naruhito honored us with his official visit to Spain in June on the occasion of the opening of the Dual Year. H.R.H. Crown Prince Don Felipe is also expected to visit Japan next year. As H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Spain has underlined, the Dual Year covers a wide range of activities from

joint business initiatives in new areas to less-known aspects of Spanish culture, which we hope will develop a renovated interest toward my country. Its program has been conceived as an open and dynamic process, which is incorporating new initiatives on a continuous basis and to setting up continuing bridges between our two societies.

This first official visit to Japan of the President of the Spanish government Mariano Rajoy from Oct. 1 to 3 will launch a new framework in our bilateral relations, following the important ascent of political visits, business initiatives and in third markets and cultural exchanges between our two countries in recent years. A new Partnership for Peace, Growth and Innovation will give impulse to and further develop our cooperation through the reinforcement of high-level visits and strong networks between our private sectors and civil societies, with a view to the celebration on our 150th anniversary of our bilateral Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, which restored our mutual historical ties ever since. Among other areas of particular importance we will consider, as a priority for cooperation, political and security dialogue, cooperation for economic growth, science and technology, global issues and cultural and people-to-people exchanges.



**President of the Government
Mariano Rajoy, Spain's prime
minister**

Brief profile of Mariano Rajoy, head of the government of Spain

Born in Santiago de Compostela (La Coruña), Spain, on March 27, 1955, Mariano Rajoy has a degree in law from the University of Santiago de Compostela.

A property registrar by profession, his political career has always been linked to the Partido Popular (People's Party), the current name of the party known as the Alianza Popular (People's Alliance) until 1989. He has held diverse positions at the regional level. He was elected a member of the parliament of the autonomous region of Galicia in 1981 and appointed director general of institutional relations for the autonomous government of Galicia.

From 1983 to 1986 he was president of the Regional As-

sembly of Pontevedra and in that final year was named vice president of the autonomous government of Galicia. In 1990 he jumped up to the national political level, elevated to the position of vice secretary general of the Partido Popular, though he had been a member of the party's National Executive Committee since 1989.

Starting in 1996, he took on various Cabinet portfolios such as minister of public administration (1996-1999) and minister of education and culture (1999-2000).

In 2001 he was designated first vice president of the government and minister of the interior, and in 2002, first vice president of the government, government

spokesman and minister of the presidency, a role he performed until 2003.

He was secretary general of the Partido Popular from September 2003 to October 2004, when he was elected president of the Partido Popular at its 15th National Congress.

A presidential candidate in

the general elections of 2004 and 2008, and re-elected president of the Partido Popular at the 16th National Congress, held in Valencia in June 2008, he has been president of the government, the equivalent of prime minister, since Dec. 21, 2011.

He is married and has two children.

Major agenda for Prime Minister Rajoy's visit to Japan

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy is paying an official visit to Japan from Oct. 1 to 3, as part of the Spain-Japan Dual Year 2013-2014, which commemorates the 400th anniversary of the Keicho Embassy, the historic mission led by Japanese samurai Hasekura Tsunenaga.

During his stay in Japan the prime minister will be received in audience by Emperor Akihito at the Imperial Palace on Oct. 2.

Prime Minister Rajoy will have a summit meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Oct. 3, with the main objective to agree on mechanisms for a reinforced political dialogue among a variety of areas and for an increasing cooperation in Latin America and Asia. At the meeting, four cooperation agreements between Spanish and Japanese agencies in trade, customs, nuclear issues and official credit will be signed. Abe will also host a dinner for Rajoy.

On the economic front, Prime Minister Rajoy will inaugurate the 16th Spanish-Japanese

Forum, which brings together companies and civil society in Spain and Japan. He will also meet with Japanese entrepreneurs and participate in the Spain-Japan business meeting organized in collaboration with Keidanren.

At the cultural level, the prime minister will inaugurate the exhibition "Inside and Outside, the Two Faces of Spanish Informalism in the Collections of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia" at the National Museum of Western Art in Ueno Park, Tokyo.

Also, Prime Minister Rajoy is scheduled to visit the city of Fukushima for the opening of the exhibition "Jose Maria Sicilia: Fukushima-Winter Flowers," which commemorates the March 11, 2011, disasters and will be held at the Fukushima Prefectural Museum of Art. Furthermore, the visit aims to support the efforts of Japanese citizens in overcoming the aftermath of the disaster and as a sign of solidarity with the Japanese people.

**Heartiest Welcome
to H.E. Mariano Rajoy Brey,
Prime Minister of Spain,
on His Official Visit to Japan**

 **Mitsubishi Corporation**



Contemporary landmark: The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is designed by architect Frank Gehry and located in Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain. SPANISHTOURISM OFFICE