

Canada Day

Enjoying a long and meaningful bilateral relationship

Mackenzie Clugston
AMBASSADOR OF CANADA

On behalf of the government of Canada, I extend to all Canadians and friends of Canada a very happy Canada Day on this 148th anniversary of Canadian Confederation.



On this special day, Canadians both at home and abroad take time to appreciate our country and its role in the world. Here in Japan, this milestone provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our long-standing political, economic, commercial, cultural and people-to-people ties.

Our two countries enjoy a strong and meaningful bilateral relationship. On the world stage, Canada and Japan work together closely on pressing international issues, such as peace support operations, nuclear non-proliferation, human rights, and humanitarian assistance. Our collaboration ranges from disaster response in Nepal and the Philippines to combatting the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa.

We are partnered in numerous international organiza-

tions, including the G7, supporting the Ukrainian people as they work to restore political and economic stability and cooperating in the fight against global terrorism, including the threat of the Islamic State group. We look forward to building on this collaboration as we move toward Japan's hosting of the G7 Summit in Shima, Mie Prefecture, next year.

This May, Canada successfully concluded our two-year chairmanship of the Arctic Council, and we look forward to continuing working with Japan, as an accredited observer to the council, to expand cooperation on research and sustainable economic development to provide further opportunities for the people of the north.

Based on our complementary economic strengths, trade between our two countries continues to expand, and Canada has become a key partner for Japan in a variety of sectors including clean energy, advanced manufacturing, agri-food and life sciences.

Investment has been another driving force in our growing economic relationship, supported by the more than 330 Japanese businesses in Canada and over 100 Canadian enter-



Canadians gather under the night sky to celebrate a past Canada Day in Ottawa on July 1. Canada is hosting the FIFA Women's World Cup this year as part of its "Year of Sport in Canada." CANADIAN TOURISM COMMISSION

prises in Japan. In addition to collaboration in the automotive sector, we have seen growth in areas such as digital media, retailing, agri-food and, perhaps most significantly, energy. One exciting sector is liquefied natural gas, where major Japanese corporations have invested almost ¥700 billion in Canada to develop ex-

port facilities and upstream supply. By choosing Canada as an investment destination, these companies will benefit from our welcoming business environment, strong economic growth, highly educated workforce, unparalleled access to global markets, and low corporate taxes.

Moreover, Canada and

Japan are both engaged, along with 10 other countries, in negotiations toward a Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, which will deepen our countries' integration within the Asia-Pacific region. We are also working bilaterally on an Economic Partnership Agreement, which will provide the opportunity to achieve outcomes tailored to the specific bilateral needs of the Canada-Japan relationship.

Our diverse and multifaceted people-to-people ties bolster our political and economic partnerships. With active regional Canada-Japan associations across Japan, 75 sister-city relationships, and a twinning between the province of Alberta and Hokkaido that this year celebrates its 35th anniversary, the grassroots dialogue between Canadian and Japanese people is vibrant. We also benefit from strong participation in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, with about 500 Canadian participants now in Japan and more than 8,000 alumni.

Canada remains one of the most popular destinations for Japanese students interested in studying abroad. In fact, Canada welcomes more language students from Japan than from

any other country. Additionally, approximately 6,500 Japanese youth visit Canada each year through the Working Holiday Program. In total, every year about 25,000 Japanese students enjoy a warm Canadian welcome and learn how easy it is to integrate into our multicultural society — an experience that can go a long way toward ensuring their well being and academic success.

This year, as we approach the 5th anniversary of the March 2011 disasters, the Embassy has launched the Canada-Japan Leadership Fund: Tohoku Project, a new scholarship program that will provide opportunities for students from the affected regions to study in Canada.

Our two countries also share rich cultural ties. Canadian musicians, such as Celine Dion, Avril Lavigne, and Neil Young have an active following in Japan, and artists such as Glenn Gould and Oscar Peterson remain legendary. In the performing arts, the world-renowned Cirque du Soleil has delighted more than a million spectators in Japan since 1992.

We also share a love of sport: 2015 has been proclaimed the Year of Sport in Canada, and Japanese athletes will be participating in many of the 60 international sporting events held in Canada this year. Foremost among these is the FIFA Women's World Cup, featuring

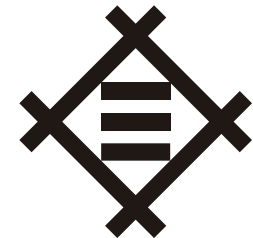
defending champion Nadeshiko Japan.

With our broad range of engagement, and our enduring links at the government, business, and people-to-people

levels, I am certain that the Canada-Japan relationship will continue to strengthen and deepen in the years to come.

Happy Canada Day! *Bonne Fête du Canada!*

**Congratulations
to the People of Canada
on the Occasion of
the 148th Anniversary
of Canada Day**



MITSUI & CO.