

# Mexico National Day

## Japanese companies reach milestone number in Mexico

Carlos Almada  
AMBASSADOR OF MEXICO

Mexico is recognized as one of the most-open countries for trade in the world, having in force 11 free trade agreements or economic partnership agreements (EPA) with 46 nations, including an EPA with Japan. All of these agreements have proven to be quite successful, giving Mexican products access to more than 1.15 billion consum-



ers representing 58 percent of world domestic product (GDP). Since 1993, the year before the North American Free Trade Agreement came into force, our trade with the world has grown 562 percent. Our exports have risen 634 percent,

while imports have increased 505 percent. As a result, Mexico is today the 15th-largest country in the world by GDP and the 11th-largest by purchasing power parity and the country has become one of the main international players in terms of trade and attraction of foreign direct investment.

In both areas Japan has become our third-largest partner, due in part to the bilateral EPA. Since the EPA it entered into

force, in April of 2005, bilateral trade has grown 73.5 percent, from \$12.75 billion in 2004 to \$22.13 billion in 2015. Our exports increased 119.4 percent (from \$2.17 billion to \$4.76 billion) while our imports grew 64.1 percent (from \$10.58 billion to \$17.37 billion). Japanese investment into Mexico has also increased substantially, to the extent that Japan is currently our main source of foreign direct investment (FDI) from Asia, while Mexico is the main destination of Japanese FDI among the emergent countries outside Asia.

Since the enactment of the EPA in 2005, Japanese companies have invested more than \$21.38 billion in Mexico in several sectors of the economy, including the automotive industry, energy, infrastructure, electronics, metallurgy and agroindustry, among others. In recent years, the number of Japanese companies in Mexico has increased dramatically from 390 at the end of 2009 to the more than 1,000 operating in our country today. To give an idea of the importance of this, until 2014 there were only 11 countries and regions in the world with more than 1,000 Japanese companies (China, the U.S., India, Indonesia, Germany, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and the U.K.). Mexico is the first Latin American country to reach that mile-



Japanese investment in Mexico has increased dramatically, especially in the automotive industry. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MEXICO

stone.

Other reasons that have contributed to make Mexico one of the favorite destinations of Japanese capital are the political and economic stability and favorable business environment facilitated by the 11 structural reforms launched by President Enrique Pena Nieto with the purpose of increasing Mexico's productivity in all sectors and regions. These reforms cover labor, antitrust and competition, fiscal and social security, finance, telecommunications and energy. Other measures have been made to strengthen and expand the rights of Mexican citizens (education reform, new law of "Amparo," and the issuance of a national code of criminal procedures) and reinforce democracy and freedom (reforms covering the spheres of political-electoral and transparency issues).

For all the shared benefits of this partnership, both the Mexican and Japanese governments, as well as the private sectors, will continue to take action to facili-

tate the arrival of more Japanese companies to Mexico. A few examples are Mexico's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement, the opening of a consulate general of Japan in Leon, Guanajuato, the recent announcement made by All Nippon Airways of a direct flight between Narita and Mexico City in the near future — in addition to the one by Aeromexico — as well as the opening of a Mizuho bank office in Mexico.

Moreover, it is important not to forget that these are just part of the recent developments in the bilateral relations. Japan and Mexico have been friends for more than four centuries, so it is only natural that the two countries are moving closer together, especially since both are complementary. As ambassador of Mexico in Japan, I pledge to do my best to contribute to the enhancement of this mutually beneficial relationship and vow to help it deepen even more each year.

## Reforms encourage further investment

Toshiyuki Shiga  
CHAIR, JAPAN-MEXICO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, KEIDANREN



On behalf of the Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the United Mexican States on its Independence Day.

On the back of the improved business environment thanks to a number of factors, including the economic partnership agreement between Japan and Mexico, more than 1,000 Japanese firms are already doing business in the country. Moreover, Japanese companies have shown increasing interest in Mexico thanks to structural reform efforts promoted by the administration of H.E. President Enrique Pena Nieto and the expectation for new and expanded business opportunities with the implementation of the

Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement.

Keidanren dispatched a mission to Mexico last month to explore the possibility of fresh business development. We strongly renewed our confidence that there are big business opportunities in various fields in the country. The Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren is determined to continue conducting its activities in a positive manner to contribute to the further development of bilateral economic relations.

Let me conclude my greetings with the sincere wish that Mexico and its people continue to prosper and that the ties between our two countries flourish.

## Ties marked by mutual understanding

Hirofumi Nakasone  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MEXICO PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP FEDERATION



On the auspicious occasion of the 206th anniversary of Mexico's independence, I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Mexico on behalf of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation.

Mexico is a friendly nation with more than four centuries of relations with Japan. As countries prone to earthquakes, we also share a history of mutual help. I appreciate the solidarity shown by Mexico following April's Kumamoto quakes.

From Sept. 3 through 5, I had an opportunity to travel to Mexico and held meetings

with members of the government and political parties, enabling me to develop cooperative ties. It was my fifth visit since becoming the president of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation. Through the visit to capital Mexico City, as well as the Japanese consulate general in Leon, Guanajuato, which opened in January, factories of Japanese firms and the supplementary school in the state, I felt liveliness there where many Japanese firms have increasingly expanded their business.

Amid deepening mutual understanding between the public of both countries, 2017 will mark the 120th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Mexico, while 2018 will be the 130th anniversary of diplomatic relations. As president of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation, I am determined to help further promote friendship between our countries and strengthen bilateral relations.

## Congratulations to México!

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Mexican Independence Day

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