

Mexico National Day

Friendly relations continue to strengthen

CARLOS ALMADA
AMBASSADOR OF MEXICO



Mexico and Japan share a close and deep relationship that began more than 400 years ago and the ties between both countries continue to strengthen every day. Japan is now our third-

largest commercial partner in the world and the biggest Asian investor in Mexico, with a significant contribution to numerous areas of our economy, including the automotive and the electronics sectors, among others. It's

been only a little more than a decade since the Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement entered into force and the number of Japanese companies in Mexico has risen dramatically, reaching 1,111, the largest in Latin America.

In accordance with the deepening ties between both countries, Mexico and Japan's steady political dialogue was showcased by the visit to Mexico in March by then-State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kentaro Sonoura and that of Secretary of Foreign Affairs Luis Videgaray to Japan in August.

In the same way, connectivity between both countries has improved significantly. In February, All Nippon Airways began to operate a direct nonstop flight between Mexico City and Narita Airport. With the addition of

this flight, complementing the existing service of Aeromexico, there are now two daily flights that connect the capitals of Mexico and Japan.

This connectivity improvement promotes not only business, but also tourism. Besides the warmth of its people, we have 34 properties — cultural, natural and mixed — inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage site list. Our cuisine is one of the few in the world, along with Japanese, that has been added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. These things have been deeply appreciated by Japanese tourists, who currently represent the first source of Asian tourism to our country. Likewise, Mexican tourists to Japan are increasing every year, attracted by its millenary culture and hospitality, as well as by its

exquisite cuisine.

Additionally, there are other areas of human exchange between our two nations. This year we commemorate the 120th anniversary of the first official Japanese migration to Mexico; the beginning of a series of Japanese migrations that saw Japanese arrive in Mexico bringing with them their knowledge and work skills to make a huge contribution to our country. Nowadays, there are more than 20,000 Japanese descendants and more than 10,000 Japanese residents in our country. Another example is the third Mexico-Japan Rectors' Summit that will take place this year in Hiroshima, and the visit of the Tall Ship Cuauhtemoc to Tokyo this month.

Japan and Mexico have been friends for centuries, so it is only natural that the two countries are moving closer together, especially since both complement each other. 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 deepen it even more each year.

Close ties in a wide variety of areas

HIROFUMI NAKASONE
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-MEXICO
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP FEDERATION



On the auspicious occasion of the 207th Anniversary of Mexico's Independence, I'd like to convey my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Mexico on behalf of the Japan-Mexico

Parliamentary Friendship Federation. I'd also like to express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families who lost loved ones in the Sept. 7 earthquake in Mexico, as well as to offer my sincerest wishes for the speedy recovery of the affected people and areas.

Mexico is a friendly nation for our country with more than four centuries of ties and exchanges. We share fundamental values such as democracy, free trade and rule of law and we are also allies tackling common issues that the international society faces,

including disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation and climate change.

In recent years, bilateral relations have been closer not only in the fields of politics and the economy, but also in science and technology, culture and academics. The economic ties have developed immensely based on the economic partnership agreement. Today there are over 1,000 Japanese companies doing business in Mexico and more than 10,000 Japanese residents.

Additionally, this year marks the 120th anniversary since the first Japanese immigrants under the auspices of Enomoto Takeaki arrived in 1897. Many Japanese immigrants have rooted themselves in Mexico and contributed to the development of education, healthcare and industry, for which I renew my deep respect. As president of the Japan-Mexico Parliamentary Friendship Federation, I'm determined to make further efforts to match the passion of the Japanese descendants toward the promotion of our cordial ties.

Let me conclude by wishing for the further promotion of our bilateral relations.

Start of nonstop flights boosts economic ties

SHINYA KATANOZAKA
CHAIR, JAPAN-MEXICO ECONOMIC
COMMITTEE, KEIDANREN



On behalf of the Japan-Mexico Economic Committee of Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), I'd like to sincerely offer my congratulations on the Independence Day of the United Mexican States.

Let me also offer my sincerest prayers for the victims of the powerful earthquake that struck Mexico on Sept. 7 and express my heartfelt sympathy to those who suffered in the quake.

Japan and Mexico have a long history of

exchange spanning more than 400 years. On the back of the improved business environment, many Japanese firms have conducted business in Mexico. The direct investment balance from Japan to Mexico

has increased more than 2.5 times over the past 10 years and today 1,111 Japanese companies are doing business there. Mexico is a crucial partner for our business circles. Moreover, Japanese firms have shown

increasing interest in Mexico thanks to structural reform efforts by the administration of H.E. President Enrique Pena Nieto.

Japan's largest airline All Nippon Airways launched daily nonstop flights between Tokyo and Mexico City in February. Through the launch, I strongly expect bilateral ties will be boosted in various fields not only in the economy, but also in politics, society, culture, tourism and people exchanges.

Our committee is determined to continue its activity in a positive manner to contribute to the further development of bilateral economic ties, so I hope to have continued support and cooperation from relevant parties.



The city of Guanajuato, a World Heritage site, is one of the best examples of colonial architecture. STATE OF GUANAJUATO'S MINISTRY OF TOURISM

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Congratulations on the Independence Day of Mexico

Yoshikazu Morita
Yoshikazu Morita

Kyoto University of Foreign Studies
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