

Queen Margrethe II's Birthday Special

Friendship prevails in face of uncertain times

FREDDY SVANE

AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK



April 16 marks the 78th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of the Kingdom of Denmark. The day is a special one to us and not only gives us good reason to pay tribute to the

head of state, but also to the relationship between Denmark and Japan in which the queen has engaged in.

Japan and Denmark share a lot of similarities. Firstly, geographically, both countries are surrounded by the sea, and the friendship derives from a mutual appreciation and understanding of democracy as being the most important basis for political legitimacy and stability. We share the same values, such as respect for democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the close relationship between the royal family and the Imperial family.

Last year, we celebrated the 150th

anniversary of diplomatic relations between Denmark and Japan, and royal visits crowned the cordial bonds between Japan and Denmark. Nevertheless, this was just the beginning of our history. As two visionary nations, we have already taken the next steps toward strengthening our relationship for the next 150 years.

There is room for further cooperation between Denmark and Japan, and the conclusion of a strategic partnership agreement leads us toward achieving this unprecedented potential.

Our strategic partnership takes substance and is set to create a unique platform for strengthened cooperation in many fields. The strategic partnership holds commercial opportunities underpinned by the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement that may enhance the opportunity to take advantage of each of our distinctive strengths. Free trade is a top priority for Denmark and we believe that economic exchanges are vital for a better world, creating better opportunities for all.

Denmark looks forward to greater collaborations on high-tech research,

innovation and expansion of the thriving academic networks, just like the personal connections and cultural exchanges that have linked our societies together for the last 151 years.

The Kingdom of Denmark is a global leader in renewable energy. Wind is our core source of energy and we look forward to inspiring Japan. Equally, we are a global supplier of food, with exports to Japan ranging from delicious pork to top-quality seafood products.

An aging society offers opportunities and challenges, and our countries are cooperating closely to develop joint innovative solutions. Innovation is not just inventing new technologies. Instead, it is much more about social and human-centric innovations.

Together, Denmark and Japan will gain new momentum from strategic cooperation. Collaborating in one area will most likely affect other areas of our relationship, while producing rewards of interest. These compounding effects are essential to reach momentum and the results will most likely be beneficial not only for Denmark and Japan, but also for the world as a whole.

It all started with a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation. In today's context, it equals free trade on goods and services. Our visions and ambitions were the driving force. With the upcoming agreement on free trade between the EU and Japan, we will take this cooperation to the next level.

On a cultural level, we are also moving forward. In 2020, the Olympic Games will be held in Tokyo. This will result in more Danish people visiting Japan and the cultural exchanges between the two

countries becoming increasingly active.

As the ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Japan and a Dane, I am proud to see the relationship between Denmark and Japan growing stronger day by day. Finally, I would like to thank our partners, especially the Japan-Denmark Parliamentary Friendship League, for promoting our friendship. With your strong support, important progress has been made and new milestones have been set.

In a world full of uncertainties, our friendship and partnership prevails.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



The flag of Denmark EMBASSY OF DENMARK



Amalienborg Palace in Copenhagen is the main residence of Queen Margrethe II and the Danish royals. MARTIN HEIBERG

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5, Kaigandori, Chuo-ku, Kobe 650-0024
<http://www.novenco.jp>