

U.S. Independence Day Special

A year of partnership and prosperity

WILLIAM HAGERTY
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



I am delighted to have this chance to commemorate my first Independence Day as the ambassador of the United States to Japan. I extend to our Japanese friends and the international com-

munity the best wishes of President Donald Trump and the American people as we celebrate our nation's birthday.

This has been a year of historic engagement for our two countries and for the Indo-Pacific region. In November, the longest trip to the region by a U.S. leader in a generation, began with the president's first official visit to Japan. The president and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made it clear that the U.S.-Japan alliance is, and always will remain, the cornerstone of U.S. engagement in the region.

Our alliance stands on a strong and lasting

foundation of shared values and interests that have greatly contributed to regional security, peace and prosperity. These values include our democratic systems and respect for the rule of law; our freedoms of speech, religion and assembly; our shared focus on good government and anti-corruption; as well as our societies and economies that are open to trade, investment and travel.

Over the past year and a half, the president and the prime minister have developed a strong working relationship. Importantly, the two leaders have also developed a great personal friendship, further strengthening the alliance and enhancing the decadeslong tradition of shared security and economic partnership between our nations.

Through our cooperation, the United States and Japan are making the world a better place. We collaborate as partners across a wide range of the world's preeminent issues, including counterterrorism, global health and pandemic response, women's empowerment and even space exploration. Our partnership has materially contributed to recent progress in confronting the challenge

of North Korea's nuclear capabilities. When I arrived last year, North Korean rockets were being launched over Hokkaido. Today, we see an opening to make the world safer and more secure.

As we become more secure, we also become more prosperous. The president's historic tax cuts, regulatory streamlining, and support for economic freedom are yielding record-setting consumer and business confidence and a significantly faster gross domestic product growth rate. There has never been a better time to invest in the United States. At his summit with the prime minister in April, the president affirmed his desire for a trade deal with Japan based on the principles of fairness and reciprocity. Our two countries can serve as a model for trade and investment promotion in the 21st century. By taking new steps to expand bilateral trade and investment, we will strengthen economic growth and job creation in both the U.S. and Japanese economies.

We are deepening our people-to-people ties as well. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics give us an opportunity to celebrate our shared love of sports. I had the pleasure of launching last month, together with Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike, our "Go for Gold" program to engage students and teachers like never before by bringing America, including our Olympians, into classrooms throughout the Tokyo area.

Let me close by once again wishing, on behalf of the U.S. Mission in Japan and the government and people of the United States, a happy and enjoyable Independence Day to you all.

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



Ambassador William Hagerty with President Donald Trump during the president's visit to Tokyo on Nov. 6, 2017. U.S. EMBASSY



Ambassador William Hagerty with Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike launches the "Go for Gold" sports diplomacy initiative at Sugekari Elementary School in Tokyo's Meguro Ward on June 2. U.S. EMBASSY



Ambassador William Hagerty and Shimoda Mayor Yusuke Fukui wave during a parade in Shizuoka Prefecture in the annual Black Ships Festival in the city on May 19. U.S. EMBASSY

*Congratulations to the American People
on Their Independence Day*



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on the 242nd Anniversary of
American Independence Day



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