

# Lithuania National Day Special

## Looking forward while celebrating shared history

**GEDIMINAS VARVUOLIS**  
AMBASSADOR OF LITHUANIA



On the occasion of the 102nd anniversary of the Restoration of the State of Lithuania, I am honored to extend, on behalf of Lithuanian people and Lithuania's highest authorities,

our warmest regards to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, the imperial family, as well as the government and the people of Japan.

I also take this occasion to congratulate my compatriots living in Japan.

On Feb. 16, 1918, the Council of Lithuania, in reference to a centuries-old history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Middle Ages, proclaimed the restoration of an independent state of Lithuania, which was subsequently recognized by

Japan and our diplomatic relations were established in December 1922.

Lithuania and Japan enjoy close and friendly bilateral relations. These relations were greatly enhanced in October during the President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda's visit to Japan.

The president took part in the enthronement ceremony of Emperor Naruhito and had a series of important bilateral meetings, including the meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and with the Speaker of the House of Representatives Tadamori Oshima.

Nausėda also had a chance to assess growing bilateral economic links by attending a business forum at Keidanren, after which the presidential couple paid a visit to Gifu Prefecture, which shares a history of cooperation and friendship.

This high-level visit, along with preceding visits in 2018 of Japan's prime minister to Lithuania and of prime minister of Lithuania to Japan, give a strong impetus to building more dynamic political rela-

tions and closer economic links between our countries.

Both share common values and a rules-based approach toward many international relations issues.

The strongest and most symbolic bridge between our two countries is the legacy of Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Lithuania from 1939 to 1940, who saved the lives of thousands of Jewish refugees by issuing them Japanese transit visas and helping to escape the Holocaust.

This year we commemorate the 80th anniversary of Sugihara's issuance of "visas for life" and the 120th anniversary of his birth. On this solemn occasion, the Lithuanian parliament dedicated the year 2020 to Sugihara.

Among many events marking this special anniversary, the traditional Sugihara week — a festival of Japanese art and culture — will take place from Oct. 12 to 18 in Kaunas where he worked as a diplomat.

The city is currently preparing for the distinction of European Capital of Culture 2022 and will also unveil a statue of Sugihara.

In connection to the upcoming Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, this year's mutual exchanges between our countries are also getting more dynamic and Lithuanian athletes are enthusiastically preparing themselves.

An important role in their preparation falls to two Japanese host towns: Hiratsuka in Kanagawa Prefecture and Toyohashi in Aichi Prefecture.

The host towns not only help Lithuanian athletes through training camps, but also facilitate extensive cultural and



people-to-people exchanges. We believe that these bonds will last long after the games end and will bring our countries even closer.

The entry into force of the economic partnership agreement between the European Union and Japan last February gave an additional boost to trade between Lithuania and Japan.

We are also expecting the number of Lithuania-bound Japanese tourists, already the highest among Asian countries, to grow further.

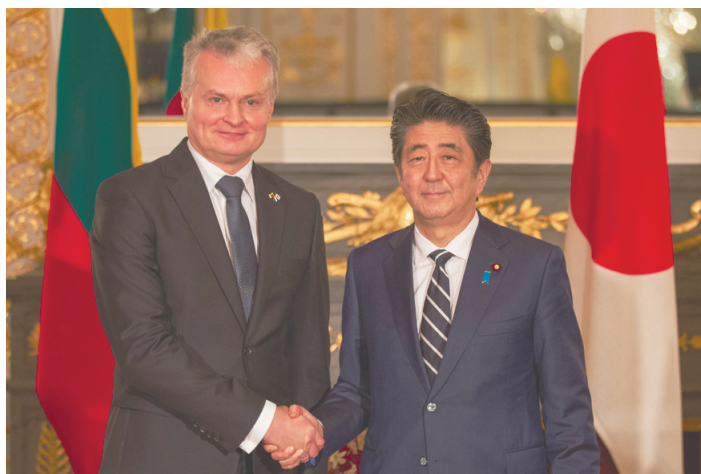
I would like to take this opportunity to cordially invite Japanese people to visit our beautiful green country located in the geographical center of Europe.

On this special day, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all friends of Lithuania and wish that the ties of friendship between our nations flourish and grow.

**Vilnius is one of the few capitals in the world that can be observed from a hot air balloon.**

GO VILNIUS

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



**President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda meets with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Oct. 21, the day before he attended Emperor Naruhito's enthronement ceremony.**

ROKAS DANILEVICIUS

*Congratulations  
to the People of the Republic of Lithuania  
on the Anniversary of Their National Day*



**FUKUYAMA TRANSPORTING CO., LTD.**

President and CEO Shigehiro Komaru  
Honorary consul of the Republic of Lithuania in Fukuyama  
<http://corp.fukutsu.co.jp/english/>

**Congratulations  
to the People of  
Lithuania  
on the Occasion of  
Their National Day**

Reopens on  
Nov. 3, 2020



*Port of Humanity Tsuruga Museum*  
The museum preserves documents of Jewish refugees that came to Tsuruga.

[http://www.tmo-tsuruga.com/kk-museum/index\\_e.html](http://www.tmo-tsuruga.com/kk-museum/index_e.html)

City of Tsuruga