

U.S. Independence Day Special

Building a strong alliance and brighter future

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U.S. CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.



Happy United States Independence Day to our many partners and friends throughout Japan. Although circumstances still require our celebrations to be more subdued than usual, and

there is no replacement for the spectacle and grandeur of fireworks, perhaps we can find satisfaction in our accomplishments amid adversity and celebrate the promise of a brighter future in the months ahead.

The strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance certainly provides cause to celebrate. Our close bonds were on full display in April, when Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga traveled to Washington to become the first world leader to meet in person with President Joe Biden. The president and prime

minister reaffirmed our countries' commitment to promoting shared values, particularly regarding respect for human rights and the importance of responsible, democratic governance — principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, signed 245 years ago.

The United States and Japan remain committed to strengthening our security partnership and ability to address challenges in the region, united in opposition to unilateral actions that threaten global peace and prosperity. The president and the prime minister announced new initiatives to enhance economic cooperation — another key pillar of the relationship — including the Competitive and Resilience (CoRe) Partnership and the U.S.-Japan Climate Partnership, mechanisms that expand our joint work to combat COVID-19, promote global health, tackle climate change, promote clean energy use, strengthen supply chains and enhance competitiveness through technological innovation.

We should also reflect on our mutual achievements in outer space. Traveling to the International Space Station on separate missions on board the commercially developed SpaceX Crew-2 Dragon ship, JAXA astronauts Soichi Noguchi and Akihiko Hoshide were the first astronauts from the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency to be in space simultaneously in more than a decade. Looking toward humanity's return to the moon, the United States and Japan recently signed an agreement outlining our partnership to build the Gateway outpost that will orbit the moon and serve as a staging point for missions to Mars and beyond.

Despite the hardships of the past year, our people-to-people ties have thrived through virtual college fairs and educational advising, visits of embassy staff to Japanese schools, and the resumption of Fulbright exchange travel just in time for the scholarship program's 70th anniversary next year.

I am proud that our two countries continue to build on our unwavering partner-

ship to drive mutual prosperity and uphold the values upon which the United States was founded. On behalf of the American people and everyone at the U.S. Embassy, I extend our best wishes to all our friends and partners throughout Japan for a happy Fourth of July.



Akihiko Hoshide of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency poses with his fellow SpaceX Crew-2 astronauts from NASA and the European Space Agency. NASA



Fireworks illuminate the sky over the White House in honor of the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on Jan. 20.
WHITE HOUSE

Congratulations to the American People on Their Independence Day



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