

# National Day of Lithuania

Publicity

## Lithuania, Japan celebrate centenary of friendship

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Thirty-two years ago, the long-cherished dream of Lithuanian people to live again in a free and democratic state came true. On the historic day, March 11, 1990, the newly elected Parliament of Lithuania adopted the Act of Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania, thus ending decadeslong Soviet rule. In 1991, diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Japan were re-established. But bilateral Lithuanian-Japanese relations date far before that time.



Algimantas Misevičius

In 1922, Japan recognized the independence of the Republic of Lithuania, and diplomatic relations between our two countries were established. This year, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of friendship between Lithuania and Japan.

One of the highlights of these relations was the brave deed of Japanese Vice-Consul in Lithuania Chiune Sugihara, when in 1940 he issued the famous "visas for life" to Jewish war refugees. Sugihara, acting against instructions, followed his conscience and saved more than 6,000 human lives from the Holocaust.

In 2007, Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko visited Lithuania, while then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and then-Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi visited Lithuania in 2018 and 2021, respectively. Lithuania's then-Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis and President Gitanas Nausėda visited Japan in 2018 and 2019, respectively. A memorable highlight of Lithuania's links with Japan was the participation of Lithuanian athletes and parathletes in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games.

As we have entered the year of the centenary of friendship, our main priority is to strengthen the economic ties between our countries and to raise our relations to a higher strategic level.

Lithuanian cheese, bread, honey, organic soups and many other food products have already found their way to shelves of Japanese supermarkets and online stores. Japan is importing Lithuanian lasers, chemical reagents, optical equipment, clothing, furniture, including its components, textile products and non-ferrous metals. Imports from Lithuania in the life sciences field are contributing to Japan's battle with the coronavirus pandemic across labs and hospitals. Internet-of-things devices made in Lithuania help to develop smart mobility and smart city projects.

Lithuania is inviting Japanese investors to work together on major infrastructure and energy projects, in-



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The old town of the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, which was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994, is said to be one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.

cluding green energy solutions, as well as to establish partnerships in the field of information technology and financial technologies. We are willing to expand scientific cooperation with Japan, especially in medical, laser, and space research fields.

Please allow me to express my sincere gratitude to all friends of Lithuania in Japan for their continuous support, and to invite all of us to work together toward even closer Lithuanian-Japanese relations.

**Congratulations**  
to the People of  
the Republic of Lithuania  
on the Restoration of  
Independence Day



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