

OPINION

Japan and Canada to further strengthen G7 unity

At a time when the international situation is in a state of great flux, it is more important than ever for the G7 to maintain and strengthen our strong ties.

Takeshi Iwaya

Opinion



I will be visiting Charlevoix from March - to attend the G Foreign Ministers' Meeting. I look forward to exchanging frank opinions on pressing issues such as Ukraine, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific with my G counterparts under the presidency of Foreign Minister Marc Garneau.

At a time when the international situation is in a state of great flux, it is more important than ever for the G7 to maintain and strengthen our strong ties. In order to realize our common goals of maintaining and strengthening international peace and stability, and a free and open international order, the G7 must unite. Over the next three days at the meeting in Charlevoix, we will engage in extensive discussions to identify the direction of measures to be taken by the G7 in addressing various issues facing the international community.

In particular, as the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific become increasingly indivisible, I believe that Japan and Canada, as neighbors, have a role to play in leading efforts to realize a free and open region based on the rule of law. I am looking forward to discussing and working together closely with the G7 members over the coming year under Canada's presidency, not only on the situations in Ukraine and the Middle East, but also in the Indo-Pacific.

Japan-Canada relations

Japan and Canada are old friends, having established diplomatic relations in 1928. Furthermore, our two countries are also important strategic partners sharing values and principles. Japan-Canada relations have never been stronger, but in light of today's complex geopolitical landscape, our two countries need each other more than ever. It is crucial to further deepen our ties across all sectors, including politics, economy, security and people-to-people exchanges.

With the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region" announced in 2022 as a compass for bilateral co-operation, work is progressing on joint exercises including the Canada-Japan Bilateral Exercise, and surveillance activities to counter illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The Japan-Canada Security of Information Agreement as well as the Defence Equipment and Technology Transfer Agreement, which are both currently under nego-



Japan-Canada relations have never been stronger, but in light of today's complex geopolitical landscape, our two countries need each other more than ever, writes Takeshi Iwaya. *The Hill Times photograph by Andrew Meade*

tiation between the two countries, will be milestones in Japan-Canada security co-operation, and we hope to achieve an early conclusion of both agreements. I look forward to taking Japan-Canada security co-operation to new heights.

In addition, Canada—which has abundant energy, critical minerals, and food resources—is becoming an increasingly important economic partner for Japan, including on economic security. In particular, LNG Canada, alongside Japanese companies, will begin supplying Canadian liquefied natural gas to Japan and the Indo-Pacific region within the year. We expect LNG from Canada to play an important role in meeting the energy needs of Asia, including Japan.

Japanese companies are also investing in building electric vehicle supply chains in Canada. There is also great potential for co-operation between the two countries in artificial intelligence, quantum, and other areas of science and technology in which Canada excels. On the multilateral co-operation side, the two countries are working together to maintain and strengthen a free and fair economic order through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and World Trade Organization reforms led by both countries. Expo 2025 Osaka in Kansai, Japan, will start in April. I am looking forward to the completion of the Canadian pavilion based on the concept of "Regeneration," and hope that the Expo will serve as an opportunity to further strengthen people-to-people and economic exchanges between our two countries.

In 2028, Japan and Canada will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. Based on the strong Japan-Canada relationship, I would like to work closely with the Canadian G7 presidency to ensure the group can fulfill our role toward our common goals.

Takeshi Iwaya is Japan's minister for foreign affairs.

The Hill Times