

## 2018 New Year Message from Consul-General Takako Ito

Happy New Year to you all!

It is finally the start of 2018. This year marks the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations. To mark the occasion, we are planning various events through the year intended to deepen understanding of Japan among Canadians, and to illustrate the importance of Japan-Canada relations. In Ontario as well, there will be numerous events starting with the screening on Jan. 7 of the film depicting the true story of the *Vancouver Asahi* baseball team. We hope you will attend and enjoy them with your friends. Please look for updates on our website for details.



This year is also one when Canada will assume the presidency of the G7, and is expected to demonstrate leadership within the international community. High-level meetings related to the G7 Summit are also expected to be held in Ontario. In order to bring the attention of Ontarians to the importance of Japan as Canada's friend and partner who shares common values, as well as to the current Japanese political and economic situations, we will be devoting much effort toward widely disseminating useful information to the public and to experts. The geographical area of Ontario is 2.8 times that of Japan, but we hope to extend our activities beyond the Greater Toronto Area, with particular focus on regions which have friendship agreements with Japan in order to support grassroots exchange.



Japan's economy in 2017 continued to show signs of recovery, with improvements in the employment environment and increases in income and consumption. The number of foreign visitors to Japan has been breaking past records, and regional economies are also showing increased activity. At such a time, in order to benefit both Japan and Ontario, we are planning to encourage the increase of Ontario's investments in Japan as well as the number of tourists traveling there. At the same time, we intend to devote efforts toward bringing Japanese infrastructure systems to Ontario as well as more Japanese food and saké.

According to a survey of October last year, the number of Japanese nationals living in Ontario was approximately 22,000, an increase of 6.6% over the previous year. I am encouraged that there are more people who are able to bridge Japan and Canada in such fields as economy, culture and education. While expressing our heartfelt appreciation for their activities, I would like to reaffirm our own commitment to serving the betterment of Japan-Ontario relations.

We have had many days of cold weather. Please take good care of your health, and accept my heartfelt wishes for a happy and fruitful year.



CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN IN TORONTO

在トロント日本国総領事館