

How is everyone as winter slowly but surely draws near?

Just as I was finishing drafting up this message, I received news that the Montreal Bulletin – a monthly publication through which the local Japanese Canadian community shared articles and editorials, tanka and haiku poems, event information, and so much more – would be going on hiatus from 2025. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt respect for the unfailing efforts of the volunteers involved in its publishing throughout the years.

On October 24, I attended a reception hosted by the Ministry of International Relations and La Francophonie (MRIF), where I had the pleasure of discussing recent Quebec-Japan relations with Minister of International Relations and La Francophonie Martine Biron, as well as meeting once more Premier Legault's spouse, Isabelle Brais. The Government of Quebec maintains 34 official representations abroad, including one in Tokyo, of the highest rank, a General Delegation. A head of foreign mission meeting by the MRIF happened to be held then in Québec City, and so I could meet with Delegate General of Quebec in Tokyo Chénier La Salle for a valuable discussion on the topic of our respective circumstances and activities. My thanks to the MRIF for providing such an opportunity.

On October 30, the Consulate General of Japan in Montreal and the Japan Foundation, Toronto, held in collaboration with Mount Allison University the New Brunswick edition of the Japanese Film Festival. The screenings of "Fortune Favors Lady Nikuko" and "Dreaming of the Meridian Arc" at the university were greatly appreciated by the participants who also had the opportunity to hear words of welcome from the Director of the Japan Foundation, Toronto, Yuki Hasegawa, on a business trip in the region.



On November 1, I visited as last year Montreal's International Tourism & Travel Show (ITTS), which is said to be the largest of its kind in Canada. It was easy to grasp by a single glance at the Japan booth centrally located in the venue that there were a lot of people there seeking Japan tourism information. Our visit took place on a weekday afternoon, but according to some of the exhibitors, there would likely be a much larger number of visitors on the weekend. I could really get a sense of how popular Japan is as a travel destination. One recent trend has many travelers who have been to Japan once before asking for information on where to go on their next trip there, searching for more niche destinations.



According to statistics by the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), approximately 420,000 Canadians visited Japan in 2023, but as of this September, 2024 had already seen similar numbers, indicating an increase of almost 40% for the year.

JNTO Toronto's ITTS booth also included representatives from the Tokyo metropolitan government, a coalition of local governments from the Kansai region, railway companies, travel agencies, as well as the Consulate General of Japan in Montreal. We introduced Japanese culture directly to the participants using origami and calligraphy, and received many positive comments. The Consulate General will continue to convey Japan's appeal to Canadians and Quebecers through a variety of cultural events.



On November 1, I met with CPQ (Conseil du patronat du Québec) President and CEO Karl Blackburn, with whom I discussed topics related to the province such as the economy and immigration.



The Diplomatic Bluebook is a compilation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan of developments in international affairs, and Japanese diplomatic activities. It is published yearly, with its first edition in September 1957, and its latest in 2024. Recently, in addition to a full English translation, a French summary is also rapidly made available. I hope the following link will prove useful in improving your understanding of the evolution of Japanese diplomacy: [Diplomatic Bluebook](#)

*\*In addition to the above, I was able to exchange ideas and opinions with various Japanese and Canadian people and organizations, making for yet another meaningful month.*