

Kenneth R. Weinstein
Nominee to be Ambassador to Japan
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
August 5, 2020

I am profoundly honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the President, to Vice President Pence, and to Secretary Pompeo, as well as to the talented officers at the State Department and especially the remarkable personnel, American and Japanese, from State and other agencies in Mission Japan for their incredible dedication during these challenging times.

I would not be here today were it not for my inspiration and closest friend, my wife of nearly twenty-four years, Amy Kauffman. Our three independent-minded children, Raina, 22, Harry, 21, and Eden, 18, are my pride and joy. If confirmed, all of us look forward to returning to Japan, a country we treasure, having visited multiple times as a family.

I am very grateful to friends and colleagues at Hudson Institute, the think tank that has been my professional home for nearly twenty-five of the twenty-nine years that I have been in the workforce. I have learned so much from our interactions and am proud of what we have built together.

Although Hudson founder Herman Kahn (1922-1983) passed away long before I joined the Institute, he stoked my interest in contemporary Japan through his pathbreaking work on Japan's economy.

I am deeply grateful to our Board of Trustees, to our Chair, Sarah May Stern, and most especially as the inaugural Walter P. Stern Chair holder, to our Chair Emeritus, Wally Stern, for their friendship and support.

And I cannot thank COO John Walters sufficiently for taking on additional responsibilities as a result of this nomination.

Numerous teachers, mentors, friends and relatives are watching online today. I especially think of others who are not with us any longer but who have guided me throughout life -- none more selflessly than my parents who dedicated their lives to serving others, and who serve as an example to my brothers and me.

My dad, Victor Weinstein, a physician in a working-class neighborhood in Brooklyn, made house calls until he was in his seventies; my mother, Hannelore Weinstein, taught for almost five decades in public schools in underserved communities in New York City.

When Mom arrived in New York in 1940 as a refugee from Nazi Germany, she and her family -- including her brother, my beloved uncle Seligman Rosenberg, who passed away in late June -- had high expectations for the United States.

Mom loved the promise of America with all her heart and imbued that love in her five sons and her students. And it is this love of country that I will bring with me to Tokyo.

The list of luminaries who have served as U.S. Ambassador to Japan is humbling, from the legendary Townsend Harris, our first Consul General in Shogun-era Japan, to Edwin Reischauer, Mike Mansfield, Howard Baker, Tom Foley, Walter Mondale and beyond.

I am not their equivalents in stature or credentials. Nonetheless, over the past two decades, as a scholar and think tank leader, I have watched the evolution of Japan's strategic culture in the face of growing challenges and played a small role in the transformation of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

I have built relationships of trust with key government and opposition figures, business leaders, intellectuals and journalists in Japan, as well as their counterparts in the U.S., that leave me well poised to assume the position of Ambassador to Japan, if confirmed by the Senate.

Our relationship with Japan is extraordinary in its depth and breadth, as demonstrated by the friendship and unprecedented level of communication between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe.

The United States' relationship with Japan has never been stronger, broader, and more important to both countries than it is now. As never before, we work side by side to preserve peace, pursue prosperity, and push forward to new frontiers. The United States and Japan stand together for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, we promote sustainable economic development from Southeast Asia to the Pacific Islands, Africa, and Latin America, join hands in the fight against COVID-19, and in the journey back to the moon and beyond to Mars.

This deep and enduring partnership rests upon the bonds forged between our two peoples, arising ultimately from our shared commitment to freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. And with your support and counsel, there is much more we can and must do in the face of immense challenges and extraordinary opportunities.

For six decades, the U.S.-Japan Alliance has served as the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. Japan hosts over 50,000 U.S. military personnel and advanced U.S. defense assets, including the U.S. 7th Fleet, enabling both countries to ensure peace and stability in the region and beyond.

I could highlight countless examples of our ever-increasing security cooperation. Most noteworthy is the close coordination of the strategic policy documents of both countries, the United States' National Security Strategy (2017) and the National Defense Strategy (2018), with Japan's National Defense Program Guidelines (2019).

The close coordination of these strategies, and our broad alignment on promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific -- a concept first announced by Prime Minister Abe in August 2016 and then adapted by President Trump in November 2017 -- are indications that that the U.S.-Japan security partnership is ever closer.

Japan is advancing our security cooperation in numerous ways, including expanding port calls and extensive participation in military exercises, completing Reciprocal Access

Agreements and Acquisitions and Cross-Servicing Agreements with other U.S. allies, as well as renewing its commitment to coordinate information security across the whole-of-government.

Japan, moreover, has increased its defense spending each of the past eight years. It has strengthened and modernized its defense capabilities, with a focus on state-of-art equipment, interoperability, cross domain capabilities, maritime domain awareness, and the emerging technologies of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

If confirmed, however, I will encourage Japan to strengthen its capabilities even further and shoulder greater responsibility within the Alliance. I would also work with Japan in its continued efforts to ensure the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, especially with respect to the Futenma Replacement Facility. Strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific requires all of us to do more.

I will also make every effort so that we and our Japanese allies successfully build a strong network of allies and partners to enhance our collective security in the Indo-Pacific consistent with the objectives of the important Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, and I applaud the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for shepherding through this important legislation.

This increasing convergence, and Japan's increasingly robust foreign and defense policies, have not occurred in a strategic vacuum. We face immense security challenges in Northeast Asia. The U.S. and Japan have worked in close partnership to meet the threat posed by North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile and related programs, including through increased cooperation on missile defense.

Japan is arguably our strongest ally in the pressure campaign against the DPRK through the full implementation of United Nations sanctions. The issue of the DPRK's abduction of Japanese citizens and their suffering in North Korea, moreover, is dear to the heart of the Japanese people; President Trump has personally raised this issue at both the Singapore and Hanoi summits.

As Beijing's military capabilities and technological prowess increases, the destabilizing actions of the People's Republic of China both in the Indo-Pacific region and globally are likely to grow as well. Beijing's unlawful maritime claims, disruptive behavior toward neighboring countries, and efforts to strong-arm neighbors -- many of which are U.S. allies or close partners -- and challenges to the liberal, rules-based order need to be called out and countered. In recent months, vessels from the People's Republic of China have harassed Japanese fishing vessels and engaged in other kinds of problematic behavior in waters around the Senkakus.

In the sustained effort to promote a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, Japan and the U.S. must intensify our multilateral and networked cooperation with other U.S. and Japanese allies and partners in the region. We also need to continue to work closely to assist our friends in Southeast Asia on a wide range of security and economic interests.

In addition to preserving the peace, the U.S. and Japan are close partners in pursuing prosperity, between our nations and beyond. The U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement entered into force on January 1, 2020 and provides an important new market access that benefits the

United States and Japan. A separate U.S.-Japan Digital Trade Agreement entered into force the same day that parallels the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) as the most comprehensive and high-standard trade agreement addressing digital trade barriers ever negotiated. Trade is an area in which our two economies thrive in the global marketplace and where we can make more progress bilaterally, and work together regionally and multilaterally.

Pursuing Phase Two negotiations with Japan toward a comprehensive trade agreement provides the United States the opportunity to further deepen our critical economic relationship. Together, our two countries comprise approximately 30 percent of global gross domestic product, and we are among each other's top trading partners, exchanging over \$300 billion of goods and services each year. The United States is Japan's top source of direct investment, and Japan is the largest investor in the United States, with \$644.7 billion invested across all 50 U.S. states.

The U.S.-Japan bilateral economic relationship is rapidly evolving into the paragon of broad economic cooperation to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.

These days, pursuing prosperity means promoting connectivity, energy security, transportation and investment in infrastructure. Under President Trump's and Prime Minister Abe's leadership, we have been expanding our economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world, including through numerous whole-of-government efforts coordinated with Japan.

The Japan-U.S. Strategic Energy Partnership and the Japan-U.S. Strategic Digital Economy Partnership are expanding cooperation with the private sector and third countries to support high quality infrastructure, energy, and digital connectivity projects. The Japan-U.S. Mekong Power Partnership helps support the Mekong region's pursuit of energy security, while encouraging bilateral and regional trade and integration in this sector.

If confirmed, I will strive for continued and expanded engagement with our private sectors which are at the forefront of efforts to preserve a free and open Indo-Pacific in the face of unfair competition from malign actors.

As part of these efforts, Japan and the U.S. have joined closely with Australia to identify and advance and certify quality infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific through the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network and the Blue Dot Network, offering a transparent alternative to the opaque lending terms and unsustainable debt burdens inherent to the Belt and Road Initiative, with the goal of signaling to developing countries that a healthier alternative to the PRC is available.

Our economic cooperation has led to close collaboration in science and technology, which is increasingly at the center of the U.S.-Japan relationship. The U.S. and Japan are working together to promote an open, interoperable, reliable and secure digital economy that will allow individuals around the globe to benefit from the promise of 5G technology, which will be critical to transportation, health care and education and the extraordinary progress of the Internet of Things moving forward.

The U.S.-Japan relationship, moreover, is pushing humanity forward to new frontiers. Japan,

which has increasing space capabilities, has become the lead international partner in our collective effort to send humans back to the moon, and is eager to take part in efforts at human exploration of Mars.

Scientists at our national laboratories and universities, as well as engineers and corporate research teams, are driving advances in materials science, next-generation computing, commercial space exploration, and more. If confirmed, I will endeavor to leverage science and technology agreements, such as the landmark December 2019 U.S.- Japan quantum sciences cooperation agreement, to expand our shared scientific horizons.

Protecting our scientific and technological innovation and protecting our intellectual property is critical to our continued economic prosperity and national security. U.S. and Japanese firms are developing exciting new technologies, which often have sensitive security and military applications.

The theft of cutting-edge research and intellectual property -- highlighted by FBI Director Christopher Wray in a recent speech on the threat posed by the People's Republic of China to economic and national security -- has far reaching implications. As Ambassador, protecting emerging technologies and critical supply chains will be one of my top priorities. This will include strengthening our cyber defenses and coordinating information security practices to preserve our shared economic and defense advantages as well.

The close collaboration on our response to COVID-19, would not have been possible without the firm trust and genuine friendship between the United States and Japan. Researchers from Japan and the United States, from both academic and private sectors, are finding innovative ways to collaborate on COVID medical countermeasures. This includes the use of Japan's Fugaku supercomputer to analyze existing medications to prioritize clinical trials for potential treatments, as part of the U.S.-led COVID-19 High Performance Computing Consortium, an international effort to use supercomputing to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Both countries are also committed to strengthening future pandemic preparedness in the region through ASEAN initiatives. For instance, Japan is supporting the establishment of a new ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases. The United States, through USAID, is supporting the creation of a Public Health Emergency Coordination System for ASEAN. Through these initiatives, the United States and Japan are both committed to strengthening health capacity to address future health security threats in the ASEAN nations.

Japanese companies operating in the United States have contributed to our medical response by donating N95 respirators and redirecting their U.S. manufacturing capabilities to produce face shields and hand sanitizers. We are also sharing information and working together with partner countries to provide solutions and support throughout the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I hope to build on our ongoing collaboration and experiences to better prepare for potential public health crises and natural disasters.

In addition, both Japan and the U.S. are taking critical measures to build supply chain resiliency through trusted vendors in the aftermath of the initial outbreak of COVID-19. I look forward to taking part in these conversations, if confirmed by the Senate, as the trust embedded in the U.S.-Japan relationship will be critical to the post-pandemic world.

Despite the disruption from COVID-19, the U.S.-Japan relationship continues to stand on a solid foundation of people-to-people relations. Japanese and Americans visiting, studying and investing in each other's countries are a tremendous cultural, economic, and strategic investment in the future health of the alliance. I am confident once the current situation settles, the robust exchange will continue stronger than ever and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. citizens traveling or residing in Japan can safely and smoothly return to normality.

The next Olympic and Paralympic games in Tokyo will symbolize and celebrate our collective triumph over COVID-19 and, if confirmed, I plan to reinforce our embassy's efforts such as the "Go for Gold" campaign, to engage with young people across Japan. This initiative brings Olympians, Paralympians, and other athletes to local communities that will host Team USA, sends American diplomats into Japanese classrooms around the country, and empowers teachers in Japan through special training programs.

I am truly honored to be nominated to serve as Ambassador to one of our most dependable and dynamic allies around the world. I especially look forward to benefitting from the support of the talented Foreign Service professionals, both American and locally employed staff, at our Mission in Japan.

I would like to thank this Committee for your consideration of my nomination. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you to advance our national interests and address our greatest global challenges through close collaboration with Japan.