

### **A Statement from the CCCJ on Entry Restrictions for Long-Term Foreign Residents**

We, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (CCCJ), wish to communicate to the Japanese government our deep concern regarding the detrimental effect on bilateral Canada-Japan trade and investment as well as on the personal lives of many of our respective citizens arising from Japan's current COVID-19 immigration policy that, in principle, bans the re-entry into Japan of a foreign national residing in Japan who has visited any of 146 designated countries including Canada unless the foreign national possesses a valid re-entry permit and left Japan before the earliest date that any country that the foreign national has since visited was respectively designated as a country subject to the ban to entry into Japan.

The CCCJ fully supports Japan's efforts to minimize transmission of the COVID-19 virus by travelers arriving in Japan who have visited countries where infections continue to rise. However, we strongly believe that the current ban on the re-entry of foreign nationals with the status of residence of "Permanent Resident", "Spouse or Child of Japanese National", "Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident" or "Long-Term Resident" who leave or have left Japan after the earliest date that their destination countries were designated as subject to the re-entry ban is an excessive and unsustainable measure.

Foreign nationals resident in Japan under permanent resident status or long-term working visas or who are immediate family members of Japanese nationals, as well as their immediate family members who are foreign nationals, must be permitted to re-enter Japan under the same conditions as Japanese citizens to ensure their invaluable paid and unpaid contributions to their local communities are not lost. From daycares, schools and universities to Japanese multinationals, foreign enterprises and start-up companies, foreign nationals are vital to the globalization of the talent pipeline necessary for an innovative and sustainable Japanese economy. There is no reason for foreign nationals resident in Japan to have their lives and livelihoods disrupted or to be separated from their immediate family members given it is not difficult to distinguish them upon entry to Japan from non-resident visitors.

The CCCJ acknowledges and appreciates the Japanese government's recent relaxation of re-entry regulations to permit non-Japanese residents of Japan who possess a valid re-entry permit and left Japan before the earliest date that any country that the foreign national has since visited was respectively designated as a country subject to the ban to entry into Japan to return to their lives and homes in this country. However, the CCCJ respectfully requests that inbound travel bans be further relaxed to also include re-entry into Japan by all foreign nationals resident in Japan under permanent resident status or long-term working visas or who are immediate family members of Japanese nationals, as well as their immediate family members who are foreign nationals, regardless of when they left Japan, what countries they have visited while outside Japan or whether their travel is essential or non-essential (but subject to any mandatory testing and/or quarantine period applicable to returning Japanese citizens).

The CCCJ has also seen media reports indicating that the countries with which Japan is currently engaged in discussions regarding reopening business travel include six countries – Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore – that are parties to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) together with Canada and Japan, which boast the two largest economies within the CPTPP. Since implemented, the CPTPP has triggered a significant increase in two-way trade and investment as well as movement of people between Canada and Japan. Given our nations' leadership roles in this multilateral pact, the CCCJ strongly encourages the governments of Japan and Canada to prioritize bilateral discussions to expediently reopen business travel between our countries as soon as practicable (ideally in conjunction with Japan reopening business travel with any other CPTPP countries) in order to effectively maintain the current multilateral business momentum the CPTPP has built.

Thank you for considering these views of the CCCJ. We are confident that the governments of Japan and Canada will work together on a high priority basis to quickly and efficiently achieve the right balance between protecting the health of our respective citizens and fostering our bilateral relations and the continued growth of trade and investment under the CPTPP.