

New Year Greeting by Hiromi Tagawa, Chairman of JATA
“ 2020, the Beginning of New Exchanges ”

Happy New Year!

In 2019, the Japanese overseas travel continue to grow and reach the elusive goal of 20 million travelers which the travel industry had pursued for years. Visa waiver programs and other governmental policies stimulated this growth of the inbound travel to Japan, which in turn led to an increase in the air route. This business environment allows us to aim at the next goal: 60 million exchange travelers.

Last year, thanks to the Rugby World Cup, the international exchange in local areas gained momentum. At Tourism EXPO Japan 2019, which took place in Osaka, exhibitors and performers from 100 countries and regions attracted over 150,000 visitors to the exhibition. This year's Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics will welcome participants and guests from even more parts of the world. The World EXPO 2025 will open its doors in Osaka, positioning the coming decade as the “Decade of New Exchanges” and the year 2020 will be the first one of this remarkable period.

The number of international visitors reached 1.4 billion. As the travel market continued to mature, the demand for experience-based tours has reshaped travel. The digital technology has increased convenience through the personalization of information acquisition, reservations, payments, and travel experiences. Against this background, by consistently offering “new styles of travel”, the travel industry will drive innovation in the tourism sector.

At present, tourism accounts for more than 10% of the world's GDP and employment. As an industry, we will continue to work to achieve the sustainable development goals set by UNWTO. In order to continue our leadership role in the “Decade of New Exchanges”, we will work for the recovery of the regions hit by natural disasters in recent years and will further concentrate on promoting peace through expanding international exchanges.

We are looking forward to receiving our distinguished partners' advice and support.

For inquiries: Japan Association of Travel Agents
Public Relations Office TEL : 03-3592-1244