

Message from the President



Kenta Saito

**Senior Vice President & General Manager, Washington D.C. Office
Mitsui & Co. (U.S.A.), Inc.**

I express my sincere gratitude for the continued and substantial support of the activities of the Japanese Commerce Association of Washington, D.C. Inc (JCAW).

I have assumed the role of Chairman starting this month, taking over mid-term following the return of former Chairman Mr. Nakamura to Japan. We are all acutely aware of the tough tides that has characterized the period since the inauguration of the second Trump administration in January 2025. There has been scarcely a moment to catch our breath, given the rapid succession of events: the signing of numerous executive orders immediately upon taking office, the announcement of reciprocal tariffs in April, the U.S.-Japan trade agreement in July, the announcement of \$550 billion in investment in the U.S. in September, the Supreme Court's ruling in February declaring reciprocal tariffs unconstitutional, and the administration's exploration of an alternative tax system alongside the commencement of tariff refunds from April onwards. Furthermore, the administration—advocating "Peace through Strength"—has pursued new diplomatic initiatives targeting nations such as Venezuela, Greenland, Iran, and Cuba that fundamentally alter the existing business landscape. Consequently, the importance of gathering information, analyzing policies, and negotiating with various governments in Washington, D.C., has never been greater for Japanese companies. Amidst this climate of constant uncertainty, I imagine many of you frequently realize the vital importance of collaboration—whether among the Japanese government, the Embassy in the U.S., and the Japanese business community, or through public-private partnerships.

To serve our members effectively even in this challenging environment, our board members are pooling their expertise to plan and host a wide range of seminars and events. Our speakers hail from diverse sectors—including media, academia, government, think tanks, consulting firms, and the corporate world—and our events address timely topics of high interest to our members. JCAW remains committed to organizing events that provide valuable information and networking opportunities. JCAW also intends to expand our cultural activities (such as sports and film events), support for Japanese language education, and community engagement initiatives, and we look forward to your active participation. To ensure we successfully navigate the turbulent waters of the second Trump administration together, JCAW is committed to fostering public-private partnerships and serving as a central hub for the Japanese business community. With your continued understanding and cooperation, we will strive for the further growth of the JCAW, and the advancement of economic and business ties between Japan and the United States.

I appreciate your continued support.

June 24, 2026

Kenta Saito