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First Lady of Japan Visits National Museum of the American Indian

Kevin Gover (Pawnee), the director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, hosted the First Lady of Japan, Akie Abe, for a tour of the exhibition, "Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations." The tour was led by museum historian, Mark Hirsch, on Wednesday, April 29.

The official visit was prompted by the first lady's interest to better understand America's past and present issues and to learn more about the history and current situation of indigenous peoples with their diverse cultures and backgrounds.

"We were pleased to host First Lady Abe and her guests here at the National Museum of the American Indian," said Kevin Gover, director of the museum. "Our museum is the ideal place to start the conversation about the history of Native peoples, and we were honored to welcome the First Lady of Japan."

Joining Mrs. Abe and Director Gover, were Jodi Gillette (Standing Rock Sioux), senior policy advisor for Native American Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council; Albert G. Horvath, Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Jacqueline Pata (Tlingit), executive director, National Congress of American Indians; Kevin K. Washburn (Chickasaw), assistant secretary, Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior; Loretta Tuell (Nez Perce), Shareholder, Greenberg Traurig, Member, National Museum of the American Indian Board of Trustees and Lillian Sparks (Rosebud & Oglala Sioux), Commissioner of the Administration of Native Americans.

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First Lady of Japan, Mrs. Akie Abe, visiting the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C.

L-R: Albert G. Horvath, Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian; Jacqueline Pata (Tlingit), Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians and Member of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian George Gustav Heye Center Board of Directors; Akie Abe, First Lady of Japan, Spouse of Prime Minister Sinzo Abe; Nobuko Sasae, Conference Interpreter, Wife of the current Ambassador of Japan to the United States; Lilian Sparks (Rosebud and Oglala Sioux), Commissioner of the Administration of Native Americans; Loretta A. Tuell (Nez Perce), Shareholder of Greenberg Traurig and Member of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian Board of Trustees; Jodi Gillette (Standing Rock Sioux), Senior Policy Advisor for Native American Affairs at the White House Domestic Policy Council; Kevin K. Washburn (Chickasaw), Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs for the United States Department of the Interior. AP/Manuel Balce Ceneta



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Entrance of Nation to Nation Gallery.

L-R: Kotono Hara, Interpreter; Akie Abe, First Lady of Japan, Spouse of Prime Minister Sinzo Abe; Masato Otaka, Minister of Public Affairs and Director for Japan Information Culture Center of the Embassy of Japan; Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Japan. Used with permission.



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Serious Diplomacy section of Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations exhibition.

L-R: Mark Hirsch, Historian of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian; Akie Abe, First Lady of Japan, Spouse of Prime Minister Sinzo Abe; Albert G. Horvath, Acting Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Nobuko Sasae, Conference Interpreter, Wife of the current Ambassador of Japan to the United States; Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Japan. Used with permission