

# Argentine national day

## Strategic dialogue based on common visions

Daniel D. Polski  
AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINA

On May 25, the Argentine Republic celebrates the 199th anniversary of the establishment of the First National Government, and on this special occasion I would like to extend my deepest respects to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and my greetings to all the readers of The Japan Times.



In the current year neither developed nor developing countries can extricate themselves from the effects of the economic and financial international crisis. Nevertheless, the strength of the fundamentals of the Argentine economy has allowed us to tackle the episodes of volatility that have arisen in the international context, enabling us to considerably reduce their impact on the real economy. That situation has been possible due to the coordinated use of economic policy tools (fiscal, monetary and salary measures, among others), leading to the maintenance of financial and price stability.

Despite the fact that the financial crisis began in the second semester of 2008, last year the Argentine economy grew 7.1 percent and the fiscal surplus was 3.1 percent of GDP. In addition, exports grew 27 percent, even though there was a slowdown in the last months of 2008 as a consequence of the negative impact from a decrease in international demand. The measures adopted by the Argentine government in the last few months are headed toward the sustainability of domestic demand and maintenance of the level of employment, without abandoning fiscal solvency.

Although it is too soon to make a precise estimation for 2009, we can assert, as in the last five years, that we will continue to grow and hold twin surpluses (fiscal and external).

Regarding our bilateral agenda, next September will be a very special month. Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs Jorge Taiana will visit Japan with a delegation of business people and academics. This will give us the opportunity to hold a new meeting of the Argentine-Japanese Business Committee as well as a forum with intellectuals of both countries, who are very well known in the fields of culture and social sciences.

Furthermore, Foreign Minister Taiana and his Japanese counterpart will co-chair the Ministerial Meeting of FEALAC (Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation). Two of the most dynamic regions in the world are represented in this forum by 33 countries, which have contributed to mutual dialogue and cooperation for 10 years.

Also in September we will be introducing our Japanese friends to some of the highlights for which we are internationally recognized: tourism, films, design, premium food products and, of course, Argentine wine.

In recent years Argentina has become one of the most attractive touristic destinations. Knowing the preference of Japanese people for nature and environmental preservation, options are unlimited when it comes to ecotourism. Argentina is blessed with a remarkably diverse and uncontaminated ecosystem. Geography, in turn, is combined with a rich cultural heritage that blends European and native traits, resulting in a variety of cultural expressions, from folk music to tango. Such diversity gives way to numerous ecofriendly activities to take part in: golf, fishing, hiking, camping, horseback riding,

off-road biking, road trips, mountain sports and water-sports.

The project "Argentine Design in Japan" deserves a special mention: In recent years, Argentine design has shown a new productive approach characterized by its creativity, excellence, and continuity with its cultural and historical roots. In this regard, in 2005 Buenos Aires received the "City of Design" award, which was granted by UNESCO as part of its "Creative Cities Network Program." Buenos Aires was chosen because of the significant efforts put forth by the public and private sectors to develop the design industry, as well as for being home to the largest community of design students in the world.

Argentina has conquered markets in Western Europe and the United States through



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ARGENTINE EMBASSY

the progressive positioning of design products. We are now replicating that model in Japan by seducing the sophisticated Japanese consumers. There are already a number of success stories that include clothing, fashion accessories, jewelry, furniture and carpets,

among others. Argentina's participation in the "Rooms Fair" next September will allow us once more to present new collections of our most renowned designers.

International cooperation constitutes a key element within the strategy of the develop-

ment of science and technology in Argentina. Our country has signed cooperation agreements with the United States, France, Germany and Canada, among others, in fields as diverse as the agro-industry, health, energy (especially renewable energies), biotechnology, nanotech-

nology, space and nuclear technology. Minister of Science and Technology Lino Baranao will participate again as a speaker at the 2009 STS Forum in Kyoto in October, which is known as the "Davos of science and technology." As a result of his visit to Japan in 2008, we are stepping up our cooperation and a workshop on biotechnology will be held in August in Buenos Aires, with the participation of scientists from both countries.

Argentina strongly believes in the importance of international technical cooperation. The experience gained from our double role as recipient of technical capabilities from other countries as well as a donor of ones of our own led us to sign the "Partnership Program for Joint Cooperation between Japan and Argentina." Since 2001, we have jointly provided through this program technical

assistance to developing countries to support their social and economic growth, by efficiently bringing together technological, financial and human resources.

The combined effort carried out in these fields is just one example of a broader "positive agenda," an agenda, which from a bilateral standpoint includes trade and investments, energy and the environment, and from a multilateral stance finds us working together on many global issues: human rights, terrorism and drugs, climate change and natural disaster relief, among others.

I am convinced that expanding the range of political and economic consultations we regularly hold will result in a strategic and multilayered dialogue, based upon common visions, and the commitment of our governments and business communities. All these will allow us to make the most of the vast opportunities that lie ahead.

## Bilateral ties can become global influence

Kunio Hatoyama  
MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
AND COMMUNICATIONS  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-ARGENTINA  
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On the occasion of Argentina's National Day and on behalf of the Japan-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship League, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Argentina.

With its dynamic nature, culture, sports, arts and music, Argentina is an appealing country to the world, and I feel its role hides unlimited potential. As an advocate of "symbiosis with nature" as a political principle, I have always had a keen interest in Argentina.

Eleven years have rapidly passed since the commemoration of 100 years of our diplomatic relations in 1998.

As the friendly ties between Argentina and our country have grown deeper, and the mutual political, economic and cultural exchanges, among other various fields, have become even more active, I strongly believe that the friendly relations of both nations should become a bridge for world peace and prosperity.

As president of the Parliamentary Friendship League and as the successor of the spirit of "fraternity" of my grandfather Ichiro Hatoyama, I will not lessen my efforts toward these objectives.

In September last year I was appointed minister of internal affairs and communications. I am currently working to intensify the international competitiveness of ICT (information and communications technology), in particular to expand the use of

the Integrated Services Digital Broadcasting System (ISDB-T) overseas by requesting its adoption by those countries analyzing its implementation, like those in South America. I know that the consideration of this system is advancing in Argentina.

Following its implementation by Brazil and its adoption by Peru this April, when the system is introduced in Argentina, it is expected to help to further strengthen the economic relationship between Japan and Argentina.

On Argentine National Day, I wish from the bottom of my heart that more Japanese as well as other people around the world get the chance to appreciate the charm of Argentina, and that the exchanges and understanding between our countries grow deeper.

## Argentine food: It's the natural, safe choice

The complementary nature of the Argentine and Japanese economies is particularly evident in the food and beverages sector.

Japan imports about 60 percent of the food it consumes and therefore needs to diversify its sources. Argentina, on the other hand, has many advantages in the production of foodstuffs, comparatively (i.e., natural resources, non-polluted lands, biological and geographic diversity, opposite growing seasons) and competitively (i.e., knowledge and tradition, skilled human resources and cutting-edge technology such as direct seeding). Due to these qualities, Argentina has been internationally recognized as an effi-

cient supplier and exporter of foodstuffs throughout its history.

Japan imports a variety of food products from Argentina, such as fine wine, olive and sunflower oil, honey, seafood (squid, shrimp and crab), fruit juice, cheese, poultry, peanuts, berries and other gourmet products. In addition, a growing percentage of Argentine exports to Japan are organic goods, such as wine, sugar, lemon juice, mate tea, dried cherries and olive oil. Argentina is the only nation in Latin America, and the second in the Americas, whose organic certification process is recognized by the Japanese government as equal to its standards.

We recognize that the demanding Japanese consumer requires competitive products of superior quality that meet the strictest food safety standards. This is precisely what Argentina has to offer: natural, healthy, premium-quality foods at attractive prices, as well as organic and gourmet products that merit the highest levels of international certification.

Accordingly, the Argentine Secretariat of Agriculture has introduced the "Argentine Food: A Natural Choice" cer-


tification label, the goal of which is to guarantee a standard of excellence.

We are proud to witness the increasing appreciation that the Japanese consumer has shown for our products as Argentine foodstuff exports to Japan have more than doubled between 2004 and 2008. And yet, judging by the volume of our bilateral trade, it is clear that our commercial relationship continues to represent a fantastic opportunity to reap the benefits of higher growth in the years to come.

**Congratulations**  
to the People of the Argentine Republic  
on the 199th Anniversary of Their National Day

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