

Cuba national day

Cuba invites foreign investment from Japan

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AMBASSADOR OF CUBA

On Jan. 1, Cuba's National Day, when we mark 51 years of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, it is my great pleasure to extend on behalf of the Cuban people and government our best wishes for peace, prosperity and friendship to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to the members of the Imperial family, the government and the people of Japan.



It was on that date in 1959 that the Cuban nation conquered the full exercise of its independence and sovereignty, starting a profound transformation of political, economic and social order held since then by a very broad popular support.

Cuban foreign policy, based on principles and observant of the postulates of the United Nations Charter, has won recognition and prestige in the international arena. As a result of that Cuba maintains diplomatic relations with all the Western Hemisphere states and the majority of the international community, a total of 184 countries. Cuba currently has 123 diplomatic missions abroad and 108 are represented in Havana. Cuba governs its international relations based on the Charter of the United Nations.

The social achievements of the revolution in the fields of health, education and sports are acknowledged beyond our national borders. The Cuban health system has international prestige recognized by international bodies such as the World Health Organization for its outstanding results that are present in the level of growth of life expectancy, the eradication of contagious diseases or their primary care and pre-

ventive character, the ample coverage of its extensive vaccination system and the low infant mortality rate.

Cuba's international cooperation system, based on the principle of solidarity as a premise of international relations, has provided 50,000 Cuban professionals to more than 100 Third World countries, mostly in the fields of health and education. Currently, 23,000 students from 84 countries study in Cuban medical colleges. "Operation Miracle," a project created and sponsored by Cuba and Venezuela that aims to operate on people with correctable visual deficiencies, has been beneficial, providing free surgeries to more than 1.6 million people from 35 countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

At an early date, the Revolutionary Government liquidated the prevailing illiteracy and laid the foundations to provide accessible and free education for all in all levels of education. Research centers contribute decisively to the country's scientific and technological progress.

Cuban educators extend their cooperation to other countries, where the "Yo, Si Puedo" (Yes, I Can) literacy method, officially endorsed by UNESCO, has benefited hundreds of thousands of people in the Third World.

In the cultural field, outstanding results have been



Cuban President Raul Castro

achieved with the support of an institutional network that allows access to different expressions of art and literature, as well as providing opportunities to participate in recreational activities to all the population, including those living in remote communities.

Cuban athletes' triumphs in the international sports arena are indicators of a successful sports policy that encourages and fosters the massive participation of people of all ages.

My country continues to acquire high-quality products and advanced technology for the National Health Service in the Japanese market. Also, prestigious Japanese companies have provided at different times equipment for construction, fishing, mining and power generation as well as spare parts for the transport sector.

The oil industry continues its development and Cuba extracts from its territory roughly half of the hydrocarbons that it consumes. The ex-

istence of 9 billion barrels of oil and 595 billion cu. meters of natural gas has been proven. In its exclusive maritime zone in the Gulf of Mexico, Cuba has increased the exploring blocks assigned to internationally established companies. It is desirable that Japanese companies participate in contracts for the exploitation of those resources.

The pharmaceutical industry, one of the main exports of the country, includes generic drugs achieved through biotechnology. Its products are exported to 58 countries, including Japan.

Traditionally, Cuba exports to Japan premium tobacco of recognized quality and prestige; different brands of rum and low wine exports are growing; and the presence of products like coffee and lobster is maintained; while that of tropical fruit pulp and juice concentrates increases, as well as that of organic agriculture and biotechnology.

Tourism is one of the pillars of the national economy. Cuba has received for the last six years more than 2 million travelers with a growing tendency rate of 4 percent. Visitors find in my country beautiful white sand beaches, tropical nature, moderate climate

and World Heritage cities, as well as a healthy environment and safe atmosphere. Participation of investors and companies in Japan in the various forms of tourism is welcome.

2009 marked 80 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and Japan, an event that we rejoiced with links taking place in a framework of friendship, respect and mutual benefit. In that context, numerous activities and events in various areas, such as culture, science, academia, business and sports, as well as parliamentary exchanges were developed in both countries, which allowed and expanded mutual knowledge and the identification of issues and fields on the global agenda for working jointly toward a better world.

Recently, His Excellency the Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla visited Japan to commemorate this remarkable fact and to celebrate the 10th Session of Political Dialogue between the foreign ministries. The meeting with His Excellency the Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada was fruitful and mutually beneficial. Rodriguez took the opportunity to also meet with the Cabinet ministers and leaders of both Hous-



Resort: Since Cuba opened up to international tourism in the 1990s, hotels such as Spanish chain Sol Melia's Las Americas on Varadero beach have provided top-notch hospitality for foreigners. EMBASSY OF CUBA.

es of the Diet.

I sincerely believe that these events will continue to expand in the future, bringing our countries and our people even closer.

I wish to stress my highest appreciation for the renewed and consistent expressions of solidarity received from organizations of friendship, members of the Diet, political parties and other spheres of Japanese society.

**Congratulations
on the National Liberation Day
of the Republic of Cuba**



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Congratulations

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