

Iran national day

Iran determined to extend friendly relations

Seyed Abbas Araghchi
AMBASSADOR OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

On the auspicious occasion of the 31st anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, I am most honored to convey, on behalf of the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran, my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor Akihito and the Empress Michiko, as well as to the government and people of Japan. I also extend my sincere felicitations to my compatriots living in Japan.



nificance, to the south. Iran, with an area of more than 1,648,000 sq. km, rich in minerals and natural resources including large reserves of petroleum and natural gas, and a population of 70 million who are mostly young and well-educated, occupies an important position in the world.

Despite intermittent aggressions launched against Iran over the past centuries, the peace-loving and friendly people of Iran have always remained committed to peace and tranquility, and pursued knowledge, divinity and justice. During the past two centuries, no historian has recorded any war or invasion, whatsoever, initiated by Iran against any other country, including its immediate neighbors.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in line with its Islamic principles and cultural values, emphasizes justice, compassion, and human dignity as well as mutual respect as its foreign policy guiding principles. Historically, Iran has always sought to have amicable relations with all countries bilaterally and multilaterally.



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Iran's foreign policy is based upon rejection of all forms of hegemony and domination. From the standpoint of the Islamic Republic of Iran, all nations should enjoy independence, freedom and peace in the framework of their values and faith.

Thirty-one years have passed since Feb. 11, 1979, when the selfless sacrifices of Iranian people under the able leadership of the late Imam Ruholla Khomeini against a U.S.-sup-



Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran

ported dictator regime came to fruit, and a just political system inspired by Islam and people's rights and wishes was established. The Iranian nation celebrated its real independence and freedom.

Over the past 31 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced tremendous political, economic and even military pressures. However, an eight-year-long war imposed by Saddam Hussein of Iraq, large-scale economic sanctions by the U.S., and huge, fabricated propaganda by certain media have not been able to weaken the will and determination of the Iranian people to protect what they have achieved after century-long sacrifices in fighting against despotism and foreign interference. Moreover, it's now an established fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran, being strongly rooted among the people, has grown stronger and more powerful in the region and the world out of all these pressures and hardships. Being a major power in the region, however, has made Iran more determined in its foreign policy to expand friendly relations with all countries, and to contribute to regional and international

peace and security. Iran's security and stability have an undeniable effect on the entire Middle East region and western Asia. That's why peaceful coexistence, promotion of bilateral relations and extensive regional and international cooperation are of fundamental value in Iran's foreign policy.

In internal policy, the Iranian political system is a religious democracy based on Islamic values and democratic institutions. Altogether 32 elections have been held over the past 31 years in the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to choose the president, members of the Majlis (parliament), representatives of city councils, etc. The large turnout of voters in each and every election is proof that they are satisfied by the way they decide their destiny.

On June 12, 2009, the tenth presidential election was held in which four candidates from major political thoughts and parties severely competed with each other. Close to 40 million out of 45 million eligible voters cast their votes in the ballot boxes, which was an unprecedented record of 85 percent turnout of voters. The votes were collected with the help of more than 650,000 trusted local volunteers under the extensive supervision of legal authorities at 45,000 ballot boxes throughout the country and abroad, including one in Tokyo. It was truly a grand and epic display of democracy and freedom.

Accordingly, President Mah-



National determination: Women vote during the presidential election June 12, 2009.

moud Ahmadinejad was re-elected with an absolute majority of votes (63 percent) polled by the voters. This election result was later examined and ratified by the Council of Guardians in accordance with election laws and regulations. Unfortunately, however, a defeated candidate, ignoring the very basic principle of democracy which is the rule of law, did not accept the result and instead of going to the relevant legal channels for the inspection of his complaints, he sends his supporters into the streets trying to achieve what he was not able to achieve at the ballot boxes! The post-election events, though, turned into a new experience and a difficult but valuable "exercise of democracy" for Iran's young Islamic democracy.

As the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I am

pleased to mention that Iran and Japan share civilization bonds, Asian identity and enjoy ancient, genuine cultures. The two countries have enjoyed cultural and trade exchanges for many centuries. Today, in addition to the extended political interaction, the economic and commercial potentials of the two countries are utilized for development and welfare of the two nations. I am convinced that this trend will bring about a further boost and consolidation of our ties in all spheres.

The year 2009 marked significant progress in Iran-Japan relations. In that year the bilateral dialogue between our countries was reinforced at high levels and fresh grounds for the extension of bilateral cooperation in various grounds of common interest were opened. In the first half of 2009, the two foreign ministers exchanged visits to their respective capitals. Foreign Minister of Iran Manouchehr Mottaki, attending the Friends of Democratic Pakistan Ministerial Meeting in April, met the prime minister and other high-ranking officials of Japan. One month later, he welcomed Japan's minister of foreign affairs during his bilateral visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran where he met President Ahmadinejad, among others.

At the end of the year 2009, Dr. Saeed Jalili, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran, visited Japan. During his stay he exchanged views with Yukio Hatoyama, the distinguished prime minister, and other high-ranking officials of Japan on a wide vari-

ety of regional and international issues. That was a very successful visit which opened a new chapter in Iran-Japan bilateral relations.

Iran and Japan relations cover regional cooperation as well. According to a joint statement issued during the visit by the foreign minister to Tehran, the two sides agreed to work together in the following fields in Afghanistan: 1) reconstruction; 2) campaigning against drug smuggling; 3) providing technical and vocational training services; 4) supporting the repatriation of Afghans in Iran.

The commercial and economic relations of Iran and Japan have been expanding in recent years. In terms of energy policy, Iran will maintain its position as a secure and reliable oil supplier to Japan. To strengthen cooperation further in this field the Iranian government welcomes Japanese investment and cooperation in petroleum and petrochemical areas. The volume of trade between the two countries in the year 2009 was about \$11 billion.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that in spite of a variety and considerable volume of existing cooperation, exchanges and trade that have been realized under the long-lasting mutual trust between the two nations, there are still many more potentials and possibilities for promotion and advancement of interactions and bilateral cooperation that their utilization will bring about greater interests for the two sides and will play meritorious roles in the enhancement and expansion of regional and international peace and security.



Living history: Iman Square, designated a UNESCO World Heritage site, dominates the center of Esfahan and is one of the largest plazas in the world. EMBASSY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



Mutual understanding: Dr. Saeed Jalili, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, meets Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama during his visit to Japan from Dec. 20-24.

Amicable relations between Japan, Iran expanding in many spheres

Chihiro Kanagawa
CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE COUNCIL

On behalf of the International Friendship Exchange Council (FEC), I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations on the 31st anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

Historically, Japan and Iran have enjoyed amicable relations and during the recent years the ties of the two countries are expanding in political, economic and cultural spheres. The mutual visits of high-ranking officials between Japan and Iran have paved the way for bilateral, regional and international cooperation. Of particular note was a successful visit to Japan by H. E. Dr. Saeed Jalili, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I would like to send my best wishes to the people of Iran for their further prosperity and continued development of cordial relations.



Persian paradise: Eram Garden in Shiraz

Congratulations on the Occasion of the 31st Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

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Congratulations on the Occasion of the 31st Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

Mohsen Manafi Niazi
PRESIDENT, PERSIAN WORLD CO., LTD.
REPRESENTATIVE, IRAN JUDO FEDERATION IN JAPAN

On this great occasion, I would like to convey our heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

For decades, Iran and Japan have maintained close relations in cultural, political, economic and other spheres. Since 1994, Persian World Co., Ltd., as a leading supplier of premium handmade Persian carpets in Japan, has been committed to further development and strengthening of such cooperation between the two countries by revealing the beauty of Iranian culture to Japanese people through unique carpet masterpieces.

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