

# Norway constitution day

## The welcome season with many reasons to celebrate

Arne Walther  
AMBASSADOR OF NORWAY

Celebrated with joy around the world, spring is a season of new beginnings, renewal and hope, especially for Norwegians after a long, dark, cold winter. As the "sakura" heralds spring in Japan, Norwegians take delight in the budding of leaves and the flowering of trees that unfold the majesty of nature. But that is not all we celebrate each year come spring.



On May 17, Norwegians are in a particularly festive mood. With children, flags and optimism for the future — all center stage. We are celebrating our National Day in commemoration of our constitution of 1814. As we cherish our independent nationhood, we are mindful of our responsibilities to the coming generations and as members of the wider family of nations with whom we share a common future in a globalizing world.

### Nobel Peace Prize

A few months ago, U.S. Presi-

dent Barack Obama visited Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian Nobel Committee cited his ambition in meeting the global climate challenge and his vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to President Obama was a forward-looking gesture to encourage global results that we would like to see, but have yet to be achieved.

Let disarmament and arms control along with environment and climate change be the themes also of the greeting that I am honored to give the readers of The Japan Times today, celebrating the close cooperation between Norway and Japan to achieve global results based on shared ambition.

### A 'Farewell to Arms'

Our countries are in the forefront of international efforts for disarmament and arms control, actively bidding a modern day "Farewell to Arms" both nuclear and conventional. At this very moment, Norwegian and Japanese delegations are hard at work to ensure the success of the Review Conference of the Nonproliferation Treaty taking place in New York to curb the spread of nuclear

weapons.

Two months ago, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan hosted in cooperation with the Norwegian Embassy an international celebration of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which concerns safe destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions and prohibition on their use. Cluster munitions cause unacceptable harm to civilians in conflict zones before and after their use. These humanitarian consequences prompted an "Oslo Declaration" that led to

the convention signed in Oslo in December 2008. Norway and Japan were among the first to sign. It was natural for us to join hands and celebrate in Tokyo the happy occasion of the necessary number of nations having ratified the convention for it to enter into force this coming August.

### Kyoto ambition

For the world today, Kyoto is the catch-word for a protocol of promises of governments to combat climate change. High

public expectations for the Copenhagen climate summit last December were not met. But the Copenhagen Accord gave promise of achieving much more at the next climate summit in Mexico half a year from now.

Norway and Japan stand at the very forefront of nations pushing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change. Norway is pressing for a more comprehensive, ambitious and legally binding climate agreement to succeed

the Kyoto Protocol. We will follow up our commitments and reduce emissions nationally and internationally. All countries must contribute by reducing emissions in order to limit humanly induced climate change.

Ten days from now, Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg will host the Oslo Climate and Forest Conference, a high-level international gathering to facilitate global partnerships to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. In October, Japan will host the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity. Norway's Environment Minister Erik Solheim is looking forward to participating in this major international conference and working with Japan to boost sustainable global development.

Kyoto is a household name to environment-conscious Norwegians. Leading universities in Norway and Japan have joined hands in The Kyoto International Forum for Energy and Environment. Our scientists deepened their cooperation at the Fourth KIFEE Conference in Norway last autumn and meet again at the height of the "sakura" season in Kyoto next year.

In February this year, former Norwegian Prime Minister Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland was honored as the first induct-

## Japan, Norway: energy, environment research partners

Per Christer Lund  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNSELOR,  
NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

Innovation Norway (IN) is integrated in the Royal Norwegian Embassy as its commercial arm. IN supports Norwegian industrial development in national and international arenas through innovation, internationalization and promotion.

The IN team in Tokyo combines knowledge and experience from Japanese and Norwegian industry and research. The integration with the embassy has demonstrated effective access and integrity toward Japanese industry, academia and government for the benefits of Norwegian companies and research institutions. The skills and experience of the IN staff span professional areas of information and communication technology (ICT), manufacturing, marine and maritime industry, design and general science and technology.

In 2003, Norway and Japan signed a bilateral science and technology cooperation agreement that is actively maintained by IN. The key focus areas under this agreement are energy and environment, material technologies and seafood safety. A number of important achievements have been met during the seven-year duration of the agreement.

• Norway is an energy nation and a global leader in selected science and technology areas of critical

interest to Japan, such as the carbon value chain, including carbon capture and storage and emission trading; production of materials for the solar and photovoltaic industry; and offshore wind energy. There is a close and long-lasting relationship between Norwegian and Japanese research institutions on polar research. This is confirmed by a delegation of 14 leading Japanese polar researchers who traveled to Tromsø, Norway, in March this year for a scientific conference.

• The Kyoto International Forum for Energy and Environment (KIFEE) is a long-term consortium between the leading universities in the Kyoto region and leading universities in Norway. The focus is on energy systems and advanced materials.

• Leading Norwegian research institutions such as SINTEF and IFE have active cooperation agreements with Japanese counterparts such as AIST and RITE within energy and environment research and technology development.

The Norwegian and Japanese governments recognize the importance of science and technology cooperation and the Norwegian Research Council and Japanese funding agencies such as JSPS and JST have earmarked funds for student and researcher exchange between our countries.

To further boost academic and commercial cooperation, IN will launch a Japan-Norway academic alumni Web site this month.



Hywind: The world's first full-scale, floating wind turbine has been operating successfully since last summer. STATOIL

ee in the new, prestigious Japanese environmental institution — the Earth Hall of Fame Kyoto — for her efforts to promote global sustainable development. The ceremony, graced by the presence of Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino, took place in the very hall where the Kyoto Protocol was signed in 1997.

### Kindred souls

Genuinely feeling that we are part of nature, Norwegians and Japanese admire its beauty and respect its forces. Our political will and state-of-the-

art technologies serve us well in spearheading international endeavors to promote global sustainable development.

Though geographically far apart, Norwegians and Japanese are kindred souls in so many ways. We are proud of our national identities, but still globally minded. We enjoy a broad spectrum of cooperation, cultural ties, business relations and warm people-to-people bonds. These have all been strengthened in the past year and we are eager to seize new opportunities to deepen our relationship in all fields.

## Common interests in the sea and seafood resources

Hans Petter Naes  
JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
NORWEGIAN SEAFOOD EXPORT COUNCIL

The sea, the seafood industry, and the seafood itself are areas where Japan and Norway share a big interest.

To Japan, the sea and its resources — as food source, as industry in various parts of the country and as a vital national resource to be carefully managed — are of great importance. In addition, Japan is one of the world's largest seafood markets and the Japanese are recognized as the most demanding seafood consumers in the world. Japan is also the origin of sushi and in the present global sushi food trend, Japan is considered the standard on seafood to which everyone else strives.

Norway, on the other side of the globe, shares this focus. With only 4.8 million inhabit-

ants, Norway is among the largest seafood exporters in the world, exporting high-quality seafood to more than 200 countries around the globe.

This shared interest in the sea and its resources is the basis for broad, strong cooperation in various fields, as well as an important trade.

Norwegian salmon is recognized around the world as a top-quality seafood. In Japan, Norwegian salmon has contributed to the development of sushi traditions, where today you find salmon as an important part of the Japanese sushi tradition. Salmon is also appreciated very much by the younger generations and thus contributes to maintaining seafood consumption, a goal in itself for health reasons.

While salmon is the best-known product, other Norwegian seafood are appreciated

just as much by the Japanese such as mackerel (*saba*) as Norwegian-quality mackerel is contributing to the Japanese mackerel traditions, and capelin (*shishamo*), which you will find in most Japanese supermarkets as well as at "izakaya" (Japanese-style pubs).

Norway's active promotion of seafood in Japan is a contribution to the general seafood market and seafood consumption in Japan as they bring attention to high-quality seafood.

This extensive trade in seafood is the basis for long-term good relations, not only between Japanese and Norwegian companies, but between governments, research institutions and the two countries as a whole. These good relations are to the benefit of both Norway and Japan. Our firm belief is that both processors, trade and consumers in Japan will benefit from close relations in this field for many years to come.

## Congratulations

on

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http://www.elkem.co.jp

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HÖEGH AUTOLINERS

HÖEGH AUTOLINERS K.K.

Sumitomo Fudosan Mita Twin Bldg. West Wing 15F, Mita 3-5-27, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-6315 JAPAN

Phone: (03) 6436-3330 Fax: (03) 6436-3329

URL: [www.hoegh.com](http://www.hoegh.com) E-mail: [autoliners.japan@hoegh.com](mailto:autoliners.japan@hoegh.com)