
Switzerland National Day Special

Growing economic and diplomatic footprint

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Warm greetings! As we approach the 160th anniversary of diplomatic relations next year, we see a period when the Swiss footprint is expanding in Japan. Whether socially, geographically or

thematically, our countries have become more mutually significant.

In addition to visits by the Swiss president and one of our parliamentary foreign policy committees last year, expert-level bilateral dialogues are underway in such fields as finance, science and trade.

The Swiss official network is expanding beyond Tokyo. On Sept. 30, our consulate in Osaka will enter its new location in Umeda. At the end of 2022, we inaugurated our hon-

orary consulate in Fukuoka and hope to reach Hokkaido before the end of this year.

War's return to Europe has reinforced the partnership in principles and values between Switzerland and Japan. I think of freedom, democracy, multilateralism, the rule of law and solving disputes peacefully. Both Switzerland and Japan are serving as nonpermanent members of the U.N. Security Council in 2023 and 2024.

On the economic front, Japan was the strongest driver of Swiss exports to Asia last year. Switzerland is the eighth-largest investor in Japan. We are back with pavilions at important trade fairs for machine tools, hydrogen and biotech.

There is new dynamism in our relationship in research and innovation. This is partly because our consulate in Osaka focuses on education and startup promotion. Additionally, the 2025 World Expo in Osaka is also mobilizing our energy. Switzerland wants a pavilion that is extra light and extra sustainable.

Currently, we are worried about construction. Many countries are struggling to secure local contractors for pavilions. We are thankful for the support Japan's ministries and the expo organizers have offered, but there seems to be no breakthrough yet. The success of a world fair depends on the quality, innovation and design of international pavilions. We hope for a quick resolution.

Our commitment to shared success in 2025 is encapsulated in Vitality.Swiss, our program for the journey to the Osaka expo. The core themes — innovation, sustainability and health — allow Swiss and Japanese stakeholders to interact in fields including art, nutrition, design, digital technology, robotics and energy. The program has collected some 50,000 participants in the past 10 months. See you at our events!

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