

Turkiye National Day Special

100 years on, new goals for another ‘Century of Türkiye’

KORKUT GUNGEN
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TURKIYE



I am honored to address the esteemed readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye. It is a privilege for us to celebrate

this exceptional milestone in a warm and friendly country like Japan.

Türkiye is steadfastly committed to upholding the values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and we are devoted to contributing to global peace and stability as a responsible member of the international community. Our guiding principle, succinct yet profound, echoes in the words of our republic's architect, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, "Peace at Home, Peace in the World."

This year marks the commencement of a new era as we embark on the "Century of Türkiye," a vision declared by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In an ever-changing world with new challenges, this

initiative outlines our country's multifaceted goals, spanning various fields such as defense, energy, digital innovation, infrastructure, agriculture, technology, tourism and health care.

With this vision, we remain committed to advocating for conflict resolution through peaceful means, rooted in international law, good neighborly relations and the spirit of solidarity, always emphasizing mutual respect and dialogue.

With one of the world's most extensive diplomatic networks, Türkiye has forged global partnerships, underscoring our dedication to engaging with the international community and fostering robust bilateral and multilateral relations. Our proactive diplomacy extends to contributing significantly to global cooperation.

As a founding member of key European institutions like the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Türkiye is an active participant in international organizations, including the United Nations, NATO, the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Organization of Turkic States, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue and MİKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Türkiye and Australia).

As a nation that actively bolsters security within NATO, Türkiye ranks among the top contributors to NATO operations and plays a pivotal role in supporting the principle of "the indivisibility of security."

We also closely monitor developments in the Asia-Pacific region, recognizing the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific security. Because of this, we advocate for closer dialogue and cooperation with all Asia-Pacific partners within NATO.

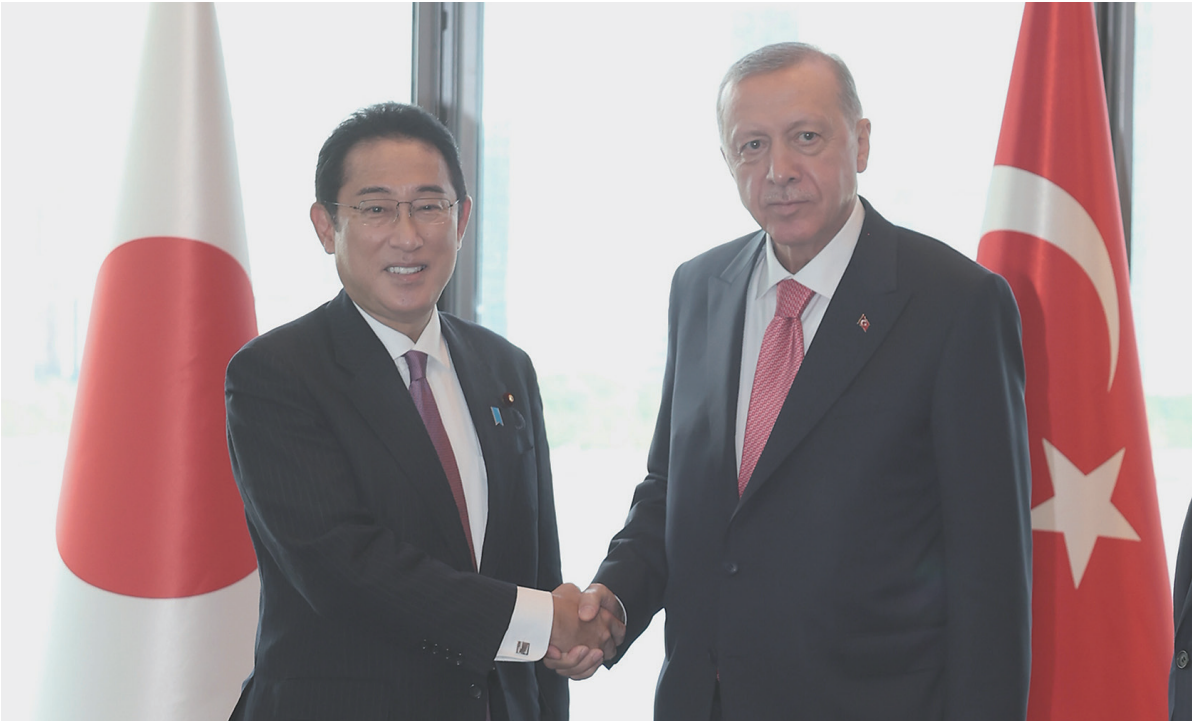
Being the easternmost European and the westernmost Asian country, Türkiye is committed to strengthening existing strategic partnerships and forging new ones. Initiatives like The Asia Anew, announced in 2019, aim to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive approach toward Asia and the Pacific, with Japan being a crucial component. Notably, The Asia Anew shares common objectives with the free and open Indo-Pacific initiative.

In a world rife with conflict zones, the war between Russia and Ukraine has garnered global attention due to its far-reaching consequences. The recent appalling developments between Israel and Palestine not only result in further loss of innocent lives and property, but also further complicate and worsen the situation in the region. Türkiye, as a dedicated advocate for peace, exerts every effort to facilitate steps for sustainable peace and stability in every direction that would benefit everyone.

Mass migration poses another significant global challenge, and Türkiye actively contributes to addressing this issue, hosting nearly 3.7 million refugees, making it the host with the largest number of refugees.

Moreover, as an energy hub and transit country, our country plays a critical role in enhancing European and global energy security. Our energy strategy focuses on diversifying routes and resources to bolster energy supply security, thereby contributing to regional and global energy stability.

Turning to our bilateral relations, Türkiye and Japan share a deep-rooted friend-



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan poses with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the Türkiye Center in New York on Sept. 21.

EMBASSY OF TURKIYE

ship, as well as a strategic partnership established in 2013. As we approach 2024, which marks the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our nations, we are eager to seize every opportunity to strengthen and expand our cooperation, making the centennial an auspicious milestone for our relations.

The enduring friendship between our nations finds its foundation in the Ertugrul Frigate incident 133 years ago, followed by a remarkable story of solidarity. More recently, during the Iran-Iraq War, Türkiye responded positively to Japan's request to evacuate Japanese citizens from Tehran, demonstrating the strength of Turkish-Japanese relations. We have also extended support to each other during natural disasters, such as the 1999 Izmit Earthquake in Türkiye and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Japan has reciprocated by providing aid after the terrible

earthquakes in February, reinforcing the bonds of friendship. We are grateful.

Moreover, we share robust economic and commercial relations. Japan is our third-largest trading partner in the Asia-Pacific region, and we believe there is tremendous potential for further collaboration. Presently, 253 Japanese companies operate in Türkiye, with investments totaling \$3.36 billion. Japan was 12th among countries in terms of direct investments in Türkiye in 2022. We anticipate these economic ties will flourish into a more comprehensive partnership in the near future.

Tourism is another avenue where we can explore further potential. In 2022, Türkiye was ranked third on a list of most attractive tourist destinations, boasting 21 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. To promote economic and tourism relations, we encourage Turkish Airlines to increase its flights to Japan, including a new Istanbul-Osaka

route starting in December.

Last, I would like to mention the Turkish-Japanese Science and Technology University, which will formally begin its academic journey next year, coinciding with the anniversary of diplomatic relations. This university will be a cornerstone in enhancing academic and technological ties between our nations.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of our republic and approach the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations, we are pleased to see Turkish and Japanese people stand by each other. This unwavering solidarity will undoubtedly pave the way for future generations to elevate our already strong relations to even greater heights.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

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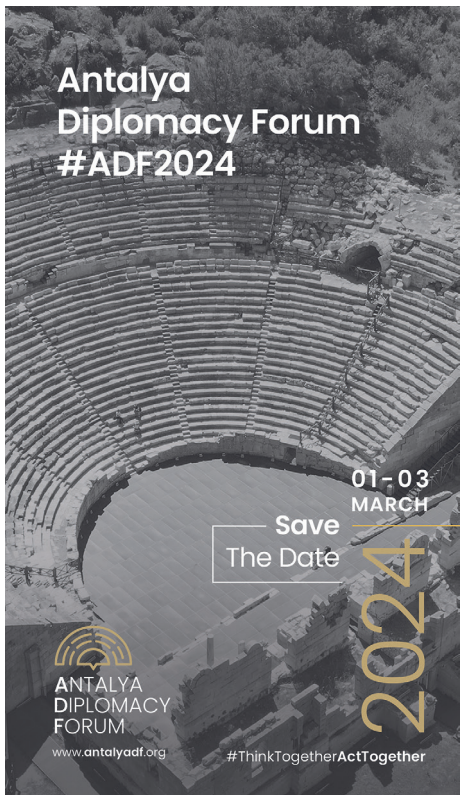
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Galata Tower rises above the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. SHUTTERSTOCK



The Antalya Diplomacy Forum is scheduled to be held in March 2024.
ANTALYA DIPLOMACY FORUM

A cyclist watches hot air balloons rise above Cappadocia.
EMBASSY OF TURKIYE



Visitors walk along the white travertine terraces formed by mineral deposits left by the famed hot springs at Pamukkale, Denizli province.
EMBASSY OF TURKIYE



Left: Ortakoy Mosque sits on the European side of the Bosphorus. Right: Neolithic period sculptures have been discovered at the Karahan Tepe archeological site in Sanliurfa province, southern Turkiye. EMBASSY OF TURKIYE

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