

Albania Flag Day Special

Tourism contributing to strong economic progress

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This month, on Nov. 28, Albanians will celebrate their 111th Independence Day. After extensive effort and sacrifice, unlike any other country in this part of the world, facing constant danger

from nations systematically hindering Albanian independence, language and culture, brave patriots and renaissance intellectuals triumphed together by declaring the independence of the Albanians on Nov. 28, 1912.

On this occasion, as the ambassador of the Republic of Albania to Japan, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako and the friendly people of Japan on the 111th anniversary of Albania's Independence Day. Kindest greetings also

go to all Albanian citizens living in Japan.

In February, after more than a decade, the first summit between the prime ministers of our countries took place in Tokyo. H.E. Edi Rama of Albania and H.E. Fumio Kishida held a very productive bilateral summit. The two leaders shared the same opinions and principles on peace, democracy, human rights, free market economies, and emphasized their strong opposition to unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion anywhere in the world.

We are very grateful to the Japanese people and their government for their contributions and support to our country during all these years of transition.

This year, Albania and Japan are contributing together to the U.N. Security Council. The coordination between the two delegations has so far been excellent. This includes cooperation on issues such as Russia's aggression in Ukraine, human rights, women's rights and climate change. Next year, Japan and Albania will share the same table in the U.N. Commis-

sion on Human Rights.

Diplomatic and political relations between our countries marked another important achievement in September when the Albania-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group conducted an intensive and fruitful visit to Japan, bringing our two parliamentary teams together for the first time.

In recent years, Albania has made astonishing progress in economic development. As a NATO member and a candidate for entry into the European Union, our country plays a very important role in stability and peace in the Balkan region. In October, Albania was the first Western Balkan country to host a summit in the history of the Berlin Process.

Albania is one of the fastest-growing economies in Europe and its tourism sector is making a considerable contribution to growth. By the end of October, Albania had welcomed about 8.3 million visitors, mainly from Europe. But Albania is also increasingly becoming a tourist destination for Japanese, who are always looking

for new places to go.

Although Albania is a small territory, it has everything to offer to satisfy any visitor who is looking for a memorable vacation. The sun-kissed Riviera, unapologetic grand mountains and iconic lakes, as well as the Charmant national parks and valleys decorate our beloved land. As a nation with ancient roots, indelible language and unique culture, several UNESCO sites here serve as a testimony to the undeniable beauty of Albania. The local hospitality of the Albanians captures the hearts of visitors. Our unwritten but highly respected code goes, "An Albanian's home belongs to God and the guest."

There is also a small Albanian community living in Japan, which is very well integrated with Japanese society. They are a bridge of union and cooperation between our countries.

Finally, we thank The Japan Times staff for the great opportunity given to us to dispatch a congratulatory message to the amicable Japanese people on the most special day for Albania.



The Pyramid of Tirana has been used as a museum, conference center, NATO base and youth information technology education center.

EMBASSY OF ALBANIA

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Albania on the Occasion of Their Flag Day

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