

# Bolivia independence day

## Managing resources for sustainable growth

On Aug. 6, 1825, Bolivia was born as a free, independent and sovereign republic. A freedom and sovereignty that today we can assume as a commitment to the people, with the beginning of a new era that is engendered by President Evo Morales.

Bolivia has become a protagonist of development, supplying the domestic market and promoting change in the energy matrix by recovering hydrocarbon sovereignty. On May 1, 2006, the state regained ownership, possession and absolute control of hydrocarbons. The nationalization generated higher incomes for the country (\$1 billion by 2005, with more than \$2.6 billion expected in 2008), without implementing "gasolinazos" and "impuestazos," which directly affect the

pockets of the population.

These resources, particularly direct taxes on hydrocarbons (IDH), are translated into more money for the prefectures, municipalities, universities and indigenous peoples. The additional participation of YPFB, the former state oil company, allows for further investment in the sector to meet domestic demand for hydrocarbons.

The neoliberal governments left us with 823,256 illiterate people aged over 15. In the period 2006 to 2008, Bolivia achieved a literacy rate of 87.9 percent (723,233 people). Only 1.7 percent of the population (100,023 people) is now officially recognized as illiterate. Moreover, as of July 4, 2008, 175 municipalities have been declared free of illiteracy.

The Bono Juancito Pinto (child benefit) program is part of the government's aim to achieve universal education. In 2006, 1,088,271 pupils were receiving the 200 bolivianos per school year while in 2007, the number rose to 1,328,231. By 2008, approximately 1,809,995 pupils in first through eighth grades at elementary schools throughout the country are expected to be benefiting.

In an effort to eradicate corruption, the Bolivian government investigated the ministries of finance, taxation and defense, and some government agencies, and then made them submit "internal reports." As a result, Bolivia's ranking on the list of 180 countries "most prone to political corruption" improved from

178th to 79th in two years — a sign of the nation's conspicuous decrease in corruption.

The consolidation process of decentralization toward autonomy at the departmental, regional and municipal levels makes better use of resources, and benefits the majority. This, together with the establishment of governance in their original indigenous territorial entities, is a process prompted by the government. Between 2005 and 2007, the resources are transferred proceeds from the nationalization of hydrocarbons. This strengthens decentralization because we have nearly tripled the resources available to prefectures while those for municipalities have increased ninefold.

From 1985 to 2005, the aver-

age growth rate was 3 percent. During the same period, GDP growth fell from 5.03 percent to just 0.43 percent. One of the objectives of government management is to achieve sustainable growth that over time creates conditions for development. During the first quarter of 2008, GDP grew at a rate of 6.07 percent, showing a clear upward trend that will determine how 2008 will close.

The management of government revenues has created for the first time in 60 years a surplus in state coffers, which is the result of a policy of austerity in public administration, particularly the elimination of expenses, and generation of additional revenue through the hydrocarbon sector, thereby avoiding measures that affect the population.

## On the road to economic recovery and development

Carlos Girona

FIRST SECRETARY, EMBASSY OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA IN JAPAN

On the occasion of the 184th anniversary of its independence, the government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia would like to express with deep emotion the happiness rooted in our communities that reach beyond the country's borders.

Bolivia is a democratic country that became independent of Spanish dominion in 1825. Stretching over 1,098,581 sq. km of central South America, it is bordered by Argentina, Paraguay, Peru, Chile and Brazil.

The main economic activities of Bolivia include agriculture, forestry, mining and natural gas — which means that it is rich in natural resources. It must be mentioned that Bolivia has the second-largest natural gas reserves in South America.

After President Evo Morales took office, he expressed his commitment to confront today's

challenges.

In the last few years, our country has become well known because of the social movements whose proposals come to be implemented in programs that help our people. Unfortunately, some of the implementations have been held back due to the lack of a solid economy. Before the nationalization of natural resources by President Morales in 2005, the Bolivian state received just \$300,000 from hydrocarbon production. After the hydrocarbon law amendment, Bolivia gets \$1.33 million.

There is no doubt that the recovery of natural resources became a major step on the road to the financial restoration of our economy and the preservation of our natural environment. All political economies should be focused on decreasing the asymmetrical social differences from country to country.

The right to self-determination, to live in a community and live well are some of the essential factors that we cherish as we work to build a stable and prosperous Bolivia.

## Poems paint a picture of the magical world of Bolivia

Between January and June 2007, the national newspaper El Diario published the poetry of Mitsu Miura, in which she opens the door to the magical world of Bolivia.

The 18 poems by Miura, published in Spanish as "Diez y Ocho Convidados por el Liróforo Boliviano (Eighteen Guests to the Bolivian 'Lyrica Forum')" are observations and interpretations of some traditional characteristics of Bolivia.

Here is a translation of one of Miura's poems, which shows the most attractive and seductive aspects of Bolivia. We invite you to participate in this wonderful world.



Mitsu Miura

swings and enjoys the warm breeze, due to the fact that La Paz was born in the "hoyada." The whole city seems to be on a rocking chair, lying next to the skirt of the Illimani, this is why the nights are so calm and sleeping takes you through magic dreams.

During the day, if we are lucky, the Illimani protects everyone, that's why this majestic mountain never leaves the city. This bond is so strong, he takes care of us on his skirt. The majestic Illimani protects us and will always protect us; he will never let anything bad happen to the city because before that happens he would have to disappear. And if our guardian was not there any-

more, then the city would be in real danger. This is why La Paz has that name: "peace."

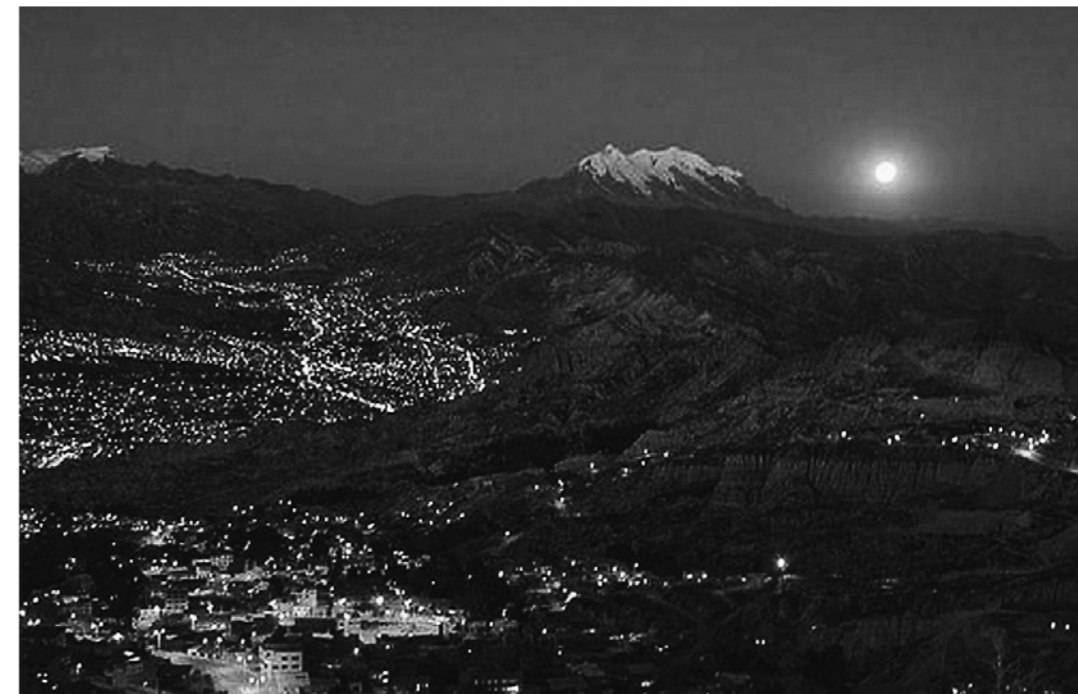
When the Illimani is completely or partially covered, people have the security that he is there, like a big magnet. If someone looks in his direction and does not find him, he knows that at any moment he will appear. That is the confidence we all have.

Like a couple in love, they are not always together because they have a trust in their hearts, and the occasional separation feeds their love and their trust.

La Paz is the city of the Illimani. Each drop of rain that falls on the city indicates that the Illimani was thirsty and

each drop that falls on him will end his thirst, or is it Mother Earth that is thirsty? When Mother Earth is sleepy she lays her head next to the Illimani to feel his energy and sleep secure. Mother Earth gets benefits from the Illimani. Who doesn't receive benefits from the Illimani, if Mother Earth does? How old is the Illimani that is protecting the city and her children? That's what the "Achachila" Illimani is like.

Article provided by the Embassy of Bolivia.



Guardian peak: Mount Illimani watches over La Paz City.

### The 'Achachila' Illimani

Someone once said: "Behind the mountain there is happiness," also behind the Illimani there is a paradise surrounded by fruit trees, green foliage and clear waters. Is it true? The majestic Illimani takes care of La Paz City. The mountain always wears a little white hat and if you look at him from the front, he looks

like a "cholita" with a "llamita" next to her. The Illimani never moves, he always protects us, but every now and then he hides, maybe he wants to keep a secret. What would

La Paz be without the Illimani? It would be like a lamp without a light or a car without wheels.

The Illimani has two faces, one in the morning and one at night. In the day his white crown shines, the light makes the whitest of whites shine; at night, it's as if that whiteness is saying: sleep safe!

As the king of darkness and silence, making a pact with the stars and the moon to guarantee the calmness of the night, the air of darkness and light, the whiteness of the Illimani plays like a child that

### Celebratory poetry reading

With the support of the Embassy of Bolivia, the Centro Cultural Hispano (Hispanic Cultural Center) will hold a poetry reading featuring "Diez y Ocho Convidados por el Liróforo Boliviano (Eighteen Guests to the Bolivian 'Lyrica Forum')" by Mitsu Miura, as a celebration event of the 184th anniversary of Bolivian independence.

As well as the recitation of Miura's poems in Japanese and partly in Spanish, there will be a piano recital by Daniel Kujavec.

The event will be held on Saturday, Aug. 8, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the Spanish-language school Centro Cultural Este-Oeste (Tozai Bunka Center), a one-minute walk from Exit 3 of Monzen Nakacho Station.

For more information, contact (03) 3641-3805.

### Congratulations

to the People of  
the Plurinational State of Bolivia  
on the Occasion of  
Their 184th Independence Day

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Honorary Consulate General of Bolivia in Osaka  
...EVENTS...

**BOLIVIA DE FIESTA** in Shinjuku-Tokyo on Aug. 9th  
further information at [www.mibolivia.org](http://www.mibolivia.org)  
**CHARANGO CONCERT** in Kameido-Tokyo on Sep. 19th  
further information at [www.cclaj.com](http://www.cclaj.com)