

Kyrgyz independence day

Region's first parliamentary democracy rises

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On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Kyrgyz Republic, I would like to convey my sincerest greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and the government and people of Japan. I also welcome this opportunity to congratulate my countrymen on this happy occasion and I express my embassy's appreciation to our friends in Japan for their marvelous support and assistance in promoting the good relations between our friendly peoples.

We represent a beautiful country Kyrgyzstan, located in the heart of Central Eurasia. Imagine that in the midst of the world-class Tien Shan Mountains, there exists a democracy with great opportunities for diverse cooperation between our country and other nations. The tolerant and educated Kyrgyz



people are also known for their generosity, friendliness and hospitality.

On April 7, hundreds of thousands of Kyrgyz citizens bravely defended their democracy. They were animated by a profound yearning to create a society built on the rule of law, a society that respects the rights and dreams of all individuals. My government, which came to power just four months ago, was charged with giving this vision meaningful expression through fair legislation, above all, through our own behavior in executing our responsibilities with honesty and integrity.

On June 27, Kyrgyzstan held a nationwide referendum on the new constitution that particularly envisages a parliamentary republic in the country.

According to results on the referendum, 90.84 percent of voters approved the amendments to the constitution, whereas 7.84 percent voted against it. Total turnout was around 70 percent of all registered voters.

The result means Kyrgyzstan will be the region's first

parliamentary democracy. Voters also endorsed interim leader Roza Otunbayeva as president for the transitional period until Dec. 31, 2011. Her inauguration comes after the country voted to adopt a new constitution in referendum.

Kyrgyzstan has become the first former Soviet country in Central Asia to have a female head of state.

Otunbayeva served as the country's first postindependence foreign minister in 1991 under President Askar Akayev. She again held the post in the mid-1990s and served as acting foreign minister in 2005 after the People's, or "Tulip," Revolution that toppled Akayev.

Parliamentary elections in my country will take place Oct. 10. The government of the Kyrgyz Republic has been instructed to ensure free, fair and transparent elections in compliance with the republic's legislation.

The Kyrgyz Republic is willing to expand traditionally friendly relations with Japan in all areas. Since the start of the relations, the Official Develop-

ment Assistance projects have amounted to around half a billion dollars. Now the government of Japan has adopted a decision to allocate \$20 million to Kyrgyzstan for restoration purposes. The decision was adopted during the meeting of Minister of Foreign Affairs Ruslan Kazakbaev and his Japanese counterpart, Katsuya Okada.

The talks were held during a meeting of foreign ministers in the dialogue Central Asia and Japan on Aug. 8. Kazakbaev noted that Kyrgyzstan is always in favor of integration in Central Asia and is working closely with Japan in the interest of balanced and sustainable development in the region.

The Foreign Minister Okada assured that Japan is ready to assist in the democratic development of Kyrgyzstan.

In my capacity as ambassador to Japan of the Kyrgyz Republic, I would like to reiterate my commitment to contribute to the further strengthening and development of the ties of friendship and cooperation between the Kyrgyz Republic and Japan.