

# Slovakia constitution day

## Bilateral relations rooted in common values

Drahomír Štos  
AMBASSADOR OF SLOVAKIA TO JAPAN

On Sept. 1, Slovakia commemorates its Constitution Day as a manifestation of the strong willingness of the Slovak people to bind their statehood with democratic principles and the rule of law. On that day in 1992, the constitution designed for the emerging sovereign country was adopted by the Slovak National Council. This step paved the way for Slovakia to be acknowledged as an independent member of the international community on Jan. 1, 1993.

In the span of just 20 years that followed, Slovakia has managed to build a democratic society, a functioning state and a market-based economy.

The Japanese government and people, among other friendly countries, made it all easier through providing development assistance and support, as well as through numerous friendly and heartfelt people-

to-people ties. I feel greatly honored to extend upon this occasion, and on behalf of President Ivan Gasparovic, the government and people of Slovakia, warm greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the government and friendly people of Japan.

As an open economy we favor free trade and in this regard we cooperate with like-minded countries at the World Trade Organization.

Bilateral relations between Slovakia and Japan are firmly rooted in common values, and based on mutual friendship and respect. Our two countries support development strategies in which aspects of sustainability and social responsibility remain essential. The visit of Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak in November 2009 proved our commitment to results-oriented political dialogue. Cooperation in science and technology, social security arrangements and easier exchanges for young people will be, together with traditional investment and trade cooperation, high-

lighted as our areas of focus in the years to come. Slovakia greatly values Japanese input in the activities of the OECD, notably in the flow of investment portfolios.

At €26 million, Japan was Slovakia's second-largest export market in Asia in 2009. The favorable and transparent investment environment attracted up to 20 Japanese companies to place their production units in Slovakia. Today, brand names such as Sony and Panasonic are manufacturing their products in Slovakia for European markets. Furthermore, Yazaki Corp., as a major supplier for

the automotive industry, and Fuso Industries, as a supplier for the air conditioning technologies producers belong to the most respected partners. In general, all Japanese investors are regarded highly for their constructive cooperation with local and central authorities, as well as being socially responsible partners.

The overall high satisfaction with manufacturing operations allows us to make advances in research and development cooperation. This move is supported by the Slovak government and widely seen as a road to the prospective future of the Slovakia-Japan economic rela-

tionship. The new Slovak government appointed after the June parliamentary elections received the business mission of Nippon Keidanren in July as its very first foreign guest.

Slovakia is becoming more and more well-known to Japanese travelers. The combination of a rich cultural heritage, which brings together elements of indigenous Slovak and various European traditions, living folk culture, vibrant city life, famous spa resorts and the beauty of its nature underlined by traditional Slovak hospitality make Slovakia a sought-after holiday destination.

Rich cultural interaction provides strong bonds between art-loving communities and contributes greatly to mutual understanding. Classical music, children's book illustrations, martial arts, Japanese traditional drum music, puppet theater and films continue to be important means of mutually enhancing cultural communication. The outstanding Slovak cellist Ludovit Kanta lives in Kanazawa, where, as a long-standing member of the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, he brings a joy through his passionate play not only to local audiences. The Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra conducted its regular Japan tour in spring 2010. The art exhibitions of Dusan Kallay, a painter and illustrator, and of the Bratislava Biennale of Illustrations toured Japan in 2009 and 2010.

I would also like to send a special greeting to all Slovak nationals here in Japan and to express my acknowledgment

## Ties have developed in wide range of areas

Ryotaro Tanose  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-SLOVAK  
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Slovak Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Slovak Republic. I would also like to express my deep respect to the important role played by Slovakia in Europe and the international community as well as to the remarkable prosperity achieved in Slovakia after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. Today, the relationship



between Japan and Slovakia has developed in a wide range of areas. Based on common and fundamental values such as democracy and rule of law, Japan and Slovakia are tackling global issues together. Both countries also cooperate in the framework of the V4 (Visegrad Group) plus Japan, of which Slovakia has been the chair since July.

In the economic field, Slovakia has attracted many Japanese companies and brought benefits to both countries. In July, Nippon Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) sent a business mission to Slovakia. I hope this will lead to further developments in bilateral economic relations.

The rich culture of Slovakia

also fascinates the Japanese. This year, the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, the Slovak Chamber Orchestra and the Slovak State Opera visited Japan and entertained Japanese music fans.

Slovakia is an attractive country with its culture, beautiful nature and warm people. I hope that cultural and people-to-people exchange between the two countries will expand even more.

As President of the Japan-Slovak Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to work actively to promote friendship and cooperation between our two countries. I send my best wishes to the people of Slovakia for the further prosperity and development of our cordial relationship.

for their continued support of the Slovak Embassy and for the role that they play, particularly in the cultural sphere, in further enhancing bilateral relations between Slovakia and Japan. My sincere appreciation also goes to all the Japanese agencies and companies that are actively engaged with Slovakia. Sincere thanks for a huge portion of the enthusiastic work and support that comes from our friends in the Slovakia-Japan Association.

Looking ahead to the future, it is with satisfaction to note that Slovaks and Japanese are deeply committed to further developing their young but flourishing relationship. I wish to express once again the sincere gratitude of the Slovak people to the Japanese people for their friendship and support.



Alpine resort: Located in the Tatra Mountains, the highest mountain range in the Carpathians, Vysoke Tatry is one of Slovakia's major tourist destinations. EMBASSY OF SLOVAKIA

### Congratulations to the People of the Slovak Republic on Their Constitution Day



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Classic form: Slovak Ludovit Kanta, who has been the principal cellist at the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa since 1990, is the winner of the 2010 Iwaki Award, which recognizes top musicians, and will perform at the Iwaki Memorial Concert at Ishikawa Ongakudo on Sept. 4.

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