

Argentina national day

Argentina-Japan, toward mutual benefit

Raul Dejean
AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINA

Today, May 25, is the day the Argentine Republic celebrates the 201st anniversary of the establishment of its first national government. On this special occasion I would like to present my sincere respects and wishes of well-being to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to all the members of the Imperial Family. I also wish to take this opportunity to convey my cordial greetings to the readers of The Japan Times.

Regarding the terrible catastrophe of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and on behalf of the Argentine government, our people at home and our embassy staff, let me express our deepest sorrows and condolences to those who lost their loved ones and their belongings in this tragedy. I also wish to express our recognition for the way Japanese citizens faced this crisis with dignity and integrity; it was a lesson of behavior for everybody. We are confident that the Japanese people have the spirit and the conditions to recover in a short time from this terrible situation and rise with renewed strength.

During the crisis our embassy remained open to the public and offered support to Argentine residents. We believe this was not only our duty but a sign of confidence in Japan and the information supplied by the Japanese government.

Argentina immediately offered official assistance to the Japanese government. First, through the expertise of the White Helmets, a humanitarian aid and peacekeeping team that specializes in scenarios of natural or man-made disasters. Our government also offered to send 500 tons of evaporated milk to Japan. Other types of aid came through the private sector.

On April 11, our Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Hector Timerman visited Japan and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto in order to personally express his sincere condolences and to show solidarity for our Japanese friends. Both ministers also talked about strengthening cooperation and trade between both countries and regions.

Diplomatic relations between our countries were established in 1898, more than 110 years ago, with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, a time when immigration by Japanese citizens was beginning to flow to Argentina.

Our governments have shared regular, bilateral Political Consultations since 1991 (the last meeting was held March 30 in Buenos Aires), as well as other frameworks to deal with more specific matters such as cooperation in science and technology and cultural affairs. These frameworks help determine other fields of mutual interest, for example digital television, where Argentina's recent decision to adopt the Japanese/Brazilian standard will undoubtedly open a wide range of opportunities for business and cooperation programs.

We recently held in Buenos

Aires the second Cultural Symposium, a dynamic initiative that aims to promote cultural exchange between both countries and to discuss ideas and experiences concerning regional and international affairs. It covered a wide variety of issues such as traditional poetry, the need to further spread haiku throughout Latin America, the difficulties and challenges of the translation of literary texts from Spanish to Japanese and vice versa, the role of modern mass media in societies, and the links between Japanese and Argentine fine arts.

Argentina and Japan collaborate actively in many international forums, including the G-20 for financial affairs. We also agree and collaborate on multilateral fields such as disarmament, nonproliferation and others.

Argentina strongly believes in the importance of international technical cooperation. The experience gained from our double role as recipient of technical capabilities from other countries and as donor of our own capabilities led us to sign the Partnership Program for Joint Cooperation between Japan and Argentina. Since 2001, we have jointly provided through this program technical assistance to developing countries in order to support their social and economic growth by efficiently bringing together technological, financial and human resources of both countries.

On Aug. 24-25 this year, Argentina will host the fifth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin American Cooperation (FEALAC) in Buenos Aires. The meeting will provide an excellent opportunity to expand mutual understanding and strengthen the bonds between the two regions while allowing us to define joint actions and projects that may contribute to the sustainable development of our nations. East Asia and Latin America are the two regions which have shown the fastest and most solid recovery from the international economic crisis.

The combined effort carried out in these fields is just one example of a broader positive agenda. From a bilateral standpoint, this includes trade and investment, energy and environment. From a multilateral stance, this finds us working together on many of the global issues: human rights, terrorism and drugs, climate change, natural disaster relief, among others.

I am convinced that expanding the range of the political and economic consultations we regularly hold will result in a strategic and multilayered dialogue, based upon common visions and the commitment of our governments and business communities. Enhanced channels of communication will allow us to make the most of the vast opportunities and common challenges that lie ahead.

In the economic and commercial field, Argentina continues to work toward the growth of bilateral trade. In 2010, global commerce between us reached \$1.863 billion, far from our potentials, underlying our will to stimulate its diversification, taking into account that Argentine exports to the Japanese market are mainly primary products, such as beef or citrus products, among others.



Showing support: Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto meets his Argentine counterpart, Hector Timerman, on April 11 in Tokyo. EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA

Argentina at a glance, is the eighth largest country in the world and second in Latin America. It has the ninth largest agricultural area, important forests, mining resources, rich fisheries along its 4,700 km of Atlantic coast, and is a very important producer and exporter of both primary and industrialized products. Argentina is also rich in energy resources: We are

one of the top five producers of biofuels, possess a promising wind and solar energy industry, have vast oil and gas resources, and produce hydraulic energy and nuclear energy.

The Argentine Republic has a highly skilled and talented workforce. It ranks first in South America in terms of innovation. It is a competitive manufacturer of goods with

added value and design and has a long tradition in activities such as nuclear energy, spatial and industrial engineering, biotechnology, software and IT, while possessing the highest ratio of researchers to the economically active population in Latin America.

For six consecutive years (2003-2008) Argentina's annual average growth rate was 8.5 percent, the fastest growing economy in Latin America during that period. According to the Argentine Central Bank, in 2010 gross domestic product expanded by 8.2 percent, mainly boosted by the growth of gross domestic fixed investment (15.8 percent) and consumption (8.1 percent). The unemployment rate has continued to fall for the fourth consecutive period to 7.7 percent.

Our countries need to further consolidate a strategic vision that acknowledges the importance of continuing to develop our bilateral relationship. This will allow us to fully take advantage of the many opportunities that exist. Countries and companies from all over the world, as well as leading Japanese corporations, have understood this and developed very successful production and commerce in Argentina.

At the Argentine Embassy in Tokyo we are confident that this positive trend will continue in the years to come, and are willing to assist all Japanese entrepreneurs for the benefit of our two nations.



Landscape: The World Heritage site known as Moon Valley in San Juan EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA



Prized crops: Mendoza Province along the Andes Mountain range is one of the important wine producing regions in Argentina. EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA

Taste the adventure of Cuyo

The Andean region of Cuyo, comprised of the provinces of La Rioja, Mendoza and San Juan, spreads along the imposing Andes Mountain range and extends its borders until the southernmost Sierras Pampeanas. Elegant poplars, rows of vineyards and swaying willow trees are dotted among apple, pear and peach orchards situated in its piedmont valleys. The region is nature's amphitheater, with a varied geography extending from the high summits of the Andes and snowcapped volcanoes down to hills and steppes. This dry and windswept area boasts endless landscapes of pristine and magnificent beauty.

The Land of Desert was the name given to this area by the Indians living there. Centuries later, the Cuyo region has developed numerous productive elements that attest to nature's permanent renewal. Pink flamingo, ducks, vicuña and guanaco are some of the many species roaming the natural parks and reserves, while condors soaring high in the sky seem to watch over every move.

With the unique mixture of weather, high mountain landscapes, native species and native people, Cuyo is a region of intense economic activities. By means of easy land access, transportation, airports and touristic infrastructure, visitors

may carry out multiple activities in contact with history, tradition and nature.

In the province of La Rioja, vineyards and olive groves complement the other shades of the desert with its green crops, which enhance the natural beauty of the productive valleys. Between impressive rolling hills and an incredibly beautiful landscape appears the Talamaya National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with strange shapes molded by the passing of time and imposing red walls of great altitude.

Mendoza is a province chosen by tourists for recreational activities. With its unmistakable identity related to wine, it is the most important wine producing province and, therefore, concentrates the largest number of wineries and vineyards. Tours associated with wine tourism comply with the expectations of those willing to discover the qualities of national wines, mainly malbec, provided it is the emblematic national strain.

Moreover, Mendoza has eight water reservoirs fit for boating, windsurfing, waterskiing, diving, yachting or sport fishing. For those loving high altitudes, climbing in Aconcagua National Park, where Mount Aconcagua resides — the highest peak in the Americas and among the highest in

the world at 6,949 meters — is another option for tourists loving nature and seeking adventure.

San Juan is also an important wine producing province in Argentina, with exquisite varieties that have received awards worldwide. This province is also dominated by natural attractions. It is the ideal place for the practice of adventure tourism and unconventional sports. San Juan was blessed with another natural landmark, the World Heritage site Ischigualasto Provincial Park (also called "Valle de la Luna," or Moon Valley), one of the most important paleontological areas in the world.

The entire Cuyo region is an outstanding destination to enjoy agro-tourism, hot springs, horse riding through a variety of landscapes, and hang gliding and paragliding in the lower mountain ranges. The dynamic vineyards, wineries and fully cultivated farms add another attraction for visitors, together with the modern winter sports centers. "Locro," "humita," tamales, "empanadas," "carbonada" and "chanfaina" are typical dishes to restore energy and stun even the most demanding palate. The fertile and intense Cuyo region combines adrenaline-rushing excitement, style and history amid endless valley and peaks.

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on the 201st Anniversary of Their National Day



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