

Turkey National Day Special

Focus on peace and cooperation to broaden global prosperity

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AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY

It is a great pleasure for me to address readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 95th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey. I would like to take this opportunity to present my congratulations to the Turkish community in Japan and my warmest greetings to our Japanese friends.



The Turkish nation, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, gained victory in its struggle for ending the foreign occupation after World War I and proclaimed the republic on Oct. 29, 1923. After more than nine decades, Turkey has evolved into a regional

power with a constitutional democracy governed by an efficient presidential government system, a rapidly developing member of the global community and a dynamic, growing free market economy driven by a talented and creative young population.

Turkey, in accordance with its foreign policy principle "Peace at Home, Peace in the World," strives to effectively respond to today's challenges as a reliable and responsible player. In this vein, Turkey pursues an enterprising and humanitarian foreign policy that has a worldwide view of all the regions and partners around her. In cooperation and coordination with our partners, including Japan, we are taking concrete initiatives to promote stability and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Turkey is also taking a leading position in addressing the humanitarian crises in our region and beyond. We are not only providing a haven for more than 3.5 million Syrians,

but also reaching out as far as Somalia, the Dominican Republic and Myanmar to deliver humanitarian assistance to those in need.

When we look at Turkish-Japanese relations, we see historical and very strong bonds. The origins of our friendship go back to the 19th century, when the imperial Ottoman frigate Ertugrul tragically sank off the coast of Kushimoto in 1890 due to a typhoon. The selfless sacrifices of the people of Kushimoto for the disaster-stricken sailors were well engraved in the Turkish heart. The spirit of solidarity and cooperation rapidly progressed since then, through the evacuation of Japanese nationals from Iran in 1985, during the Iran-Iraq War and the ensuing natural disasters that have occurred in our countries. Our relations are based on a special friendship developed throughout such instances of heartwarming affinity and cooperation.

Based on this strong friendship between our peoples, Turkey and Japan forged very

strong relations. We enjoy excellent political relations thanks to the close dialogue and cooperation at the highest level. We elevated our ties to strategic relationship as agreed by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during his visit to Turkey in 2013. It is my firm conviction that our relations will further strengthen with high-level visits expected to take place next year.

Economic relations constitute one of the main pillars of Turkish-Japanese relations. The negotiations on an economic partnership agreement are currently ongoing. Once finalized, this agreement will provide investors with clear guidelines and a more secure operating environment. We will also continue to organize business-to-business meetings in order to intensify contacts between Turkish and Japanese circles. Another important issue on our economic agenda is the Sinop Nuclear Power Plant Project and the Turkish government wishes to proceed

with this colossal project in a speedy manner. Moreover, we are currently exploring the potential for further cooperation between our companies operating in developing countries.

Another priority in the coming term will be to further improve people-to-people contacts between our friendly nations by increasing cultural exchanges. We are planning to declare 2019 as the "Turkish Culture Year in Japan" and host various cultural events throughout Japan next year. The biggest of these events will be the exhibition of artifacts from the famous Topkapi Palace Museum's collection in Tokyo and Kyoto. I sincerely believe these events will be helpful in introducing Turkish culture to the Japanese public.

In concluding my remarks, I would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the government of Japan, the Japan-Turkey Friendship Society, the Tokyo Japanese-



Region of Cappadocia. EMBASSY OF TURKEY

Turkish Women's Club and friendship societies all over Japan for their contribution to the impeccable cooperation between the two countries.

Last but not least, our thanks also go to The Japan Times, the generous support and constructive cooperation of which we have always received.

With these thoughts in mind, I would like to extend, once again to the readers of The Japan Times, our most heartfelt greetings.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



The historic Hagia Sophia Museum in Istanbul. EMBASSY OF TURKEY

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