

Brazil Independence Day Special

Ongoing growth in thriving relationship

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It is a great pleasure to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of Brazil's National Day, Sept. 7. Relations between Brazil and Japan have continued to thrive. In a clear sign of the priority by our governments, President Jair Bolsonaro and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have

already met twice this year, in Davos and at the Group of 20 Osaka summit. Bolsonaro has also confirmed his participation in the enthronement of the emperor of Japan in October.

Brazil and Japan have a long history of successful cooperation, from the agricultural boom in the Brazilian Cerrado (savanna) to the development of our steel industry. However, our work together extends to a much broader range of areas, such as agriculture, environment, energy, investments, defense and support of Venezuelan migrants. Japan continues to be of great importance in providing key investments and technology, while Bra-

zil, on the other hand, has been a reliable partner in assuring food security in Japan.

Trade is an area with great potential in our bilateral relationship. Brazil and our partners in the Mercosur South American trade bloc are keen on negotiating a trade agreement with Japan. Our commitment to free trade and our willingness to negotiate have resulted in important achievements over the past eight months. Mercosur closed historic agreements with the European Union and with the European Free Trade Association. Important discussions with key Asian partners, such as South Korea and Singapore, are also underway. We are confident that, in the near future, we can achieve the goal of successful negotiations for an economic partnership agreement with Japan, our most traditional partner in Asia. For Japan, a deal with Mercosur would add a "missing link" to the chain of economic agreements it has been forming worldwide.

2020 will mark the 30th anniversary of the Brazilian community in Japan. These three decades deserve to be commemorated given the importance of the Brazilian presence to Japanese growth and to the strengthening of our 111-year history of human bonds with Japan. There are

currently over 200,000 Brazilians in Japan, the largest non-Asian foreign community in the country. Along with the almost 2 million Japanese descendants in Brazil, they represent one of the most important bridges between our two nations.

Finally, a few words on the regrettable fires in the Amazon region. Brazil does not treat the matter lightly and has taken firm and unprecedented steps to solve the problem. A large operation, involving several Brazilian ministries and over 43,000 members of the armed forces, has been in action in the region. The Brazilian government has increased the budget for firefighting in the area and works in close cooperation with other countries. The initial results are cause for optimism as since Aug. 23, when the operation started, the affected area has already been reduced.

Brazil and Japan will continue to work together to give increasing substance to our bilateral global partnership. We look forward to the new opportunities that will arise over the next year to enrich our bilateral agenda even further.

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



Top: President Jair Bolsonaro and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at their meeting on the sidelines of the Group of 20 Osaka summit in June. Above: An aerial view of Brasilia, the capital
PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE OF BRAZIL / BENTO VIANA, GOVERNO DO DISTRITO FEDERAL



A Brazilian flag is raised beside a sculpture at Three Power Square in Brasilia. The square, surrounded by the three branches of government, was designed by Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer. TONINHO TAVARES, AGENCIA BRASILIA

Congratulations
to the People of Brazil
on the Occasion of
the 197th Anniversary of
Their Independence



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Congratulations
to the People
of the Federative Republic
of
Brazil
on the Occasion
of Their Independence Day



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