

Georgia Independence Day Special

Reflecting on 103 years of progress and democracy

TEIMURAZ LEZHAVA
CHARGE D'AFFAIRS A.I.



On May 26, we, Georgians, celebrate the 103rd anniversary of the restoration of our statehood. Exactly 103 years ago, we declared independence and established the First Democratic Republic

of Georgia. Our nation chose a path of peaceful and democratic development to create a free country, with free people, respecting the rule of law, democracy and human rights. Unfortunately, the first republic ceased to exist as a result of the Soviet occupation in 1921, until we regained our freedom in 1991.

It must be underlined that Japan was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Georgia both during the First Republic, as well as in 1992. Japan has always been a loyal friend and valuable part-

ner to our nation, supporting Georgians in the hardest times throughout our journey to building democratic institutions and a sustainable economy. Thanks to our international friends and the dedication of Georgian society, we managed to overcome all the obstacles in an incredibly short period of time, making us one of the most progressive countries in the region. According to prominent international rankings, Georgia is one of the safest countries in the world, with one of the most liberal and flexible tax systems, an exceptionally positive investment climate and a business-friendly government. Located in a geopolitically important area, we form a natural crossroad of globally important trading routes, pipelines and transnational infrastructure projects. Georgia is an economic, trade and logistical hub with free-trade regimes with almost all the important stakeholders around, including the European Union, Turkey and China, among others.

There is up-to-date information about Georgia's economy and business climate on our website (<http://georgia-keizai.com/>). At

the same time, we are proud of our unique culture, history, traditions, amazing cuisine and oldest tradition of winemaking in the world. Yes, we are the homeland of wine. The first wine was made in this region about 8,000 years ago. We are proud of our exceptionally diverse nature and mesmerizing landscapes. The congruence of these makes Georgia one of the most rapidly growing tourism destinations, attracting millions from all around the planet. During the pandemic, when tourists had limited means of visiting Georgia, *shkmeruli* and other Georgian dishes became more popular in Japan, garnering more interest in our cuisine, history and culture. There are many interesting facts about Georgia on our bilingual tourism website (<http://letsgeorgia.com/>).

Georgia and Japan have many important similarities. We both are among the oldest countries and have exceptional cultures of hospitality. Both our nations succeeded in preserving their traditions while becoming modern societies. Most importantly, we have exemplary positive political and economic

relationships. I am happy that our relationships have especially intensified recently with a number of high-level political visits from Georgia to Japan and vice versa. At the beginning of the year, Japan and Georgia signed a bilateral investment treaty and agreement for the avoidance of double taxation. We witness increased interest from Japanese companies in doing business in Georgia. For example, we are delighted that just recently, Tepco Renewable Power Inc. decided to invest in Georgia's green energy sector, giving new stimulus for even more intensified economic and trade relationships.

In the end, I would like to again express words of gratitude to our friends in Japan for their important contribution to the development of Georgia, for engaging in extremely positive political, economic and cultural relationships and for supporting our sovereignty and territorial integrity. I'm absolutely sure that our already excellent relationship will become even more close and cordial in the years to come.

Gaumarjos.



The Alaverdi Monastery has a long history dating back to the sixth century and is known for its architecture and winemaking traditions.

**Congratulations
to the people of Georgia
on their Independence Day**



NS Semicon Co.,Ltd.
<http://www.nssemicon.com/>
info@nssemicon.com

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