

---

# Latvia National Day Special

---

## Celebrating a century of bilateral friendship

**DACE TREIJA-MASI**

AMBASSADOR OF LATVIA



On Nov. 18, the Republic of Latvia celebrates its 103rd anniversary. Over the past century our nation has experienced a lot — from founding a state and withstanding occupations to restoring

our independence through peaceful resistance. It is a great achievement that today we can celebrate our National Day as a free and democratic society in a country that is a full-fledged member of the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other international organizations.

This is also a very special year for Latvia-Japan relations. Our countries celebrate 100 years of friendship as Japan was among the

first states that recognized Latvia's sovereignty de jure. This was a pivotal moment for Latvia as it sought to assert itself as a fully independent state and establish diplomatic relations.

Today, Latvia and Japan are close partners and like-minded countries. We share common goals of strengthening multilateralism, democracy and human rights, as well as developing economic cooperation. This year we welcomed H.E. Toshimitsu Motegi to Latvia as minister of foreign affairs. The historic visit by a Japanese foreign minister was a timely opportunity to reflect on bilateral cooperation, promote economic ties and discuss the latest international developments, including possibilities for closer coordination in the Indo-Pacific region.

Both our countries are committed towards greener, more digital and more connected economies, and that creates a good basis for cooperation. There are already a number of successful Latvian companies offering world-class technologies and information and communications technology solutions

for the Japanese market. We appreciate recent Japanese investments in strategically important energy and transportation sectors of Latvia and are working to develop projects in areas of mutual interest, particularly in connectivity and e-commerce. As a host country for next year's Three Seas Summit and Business Forum, Latvia stands ready to facilitate Japan's involvement in regional energy, ICT and transportation projects.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to The Japan Times for the opportunity to publish this message and to invite everyone to join the Latvian Days events that will take place from Dec. 7 to 19 in Roppongi Hills. It will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about Latvia and to celebrate the beginning of the next centenary of friendship between Latvia and Japan.

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