
Kosovo National Day Special

Friendly bonds built on close cooperation

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Today, the Republic of Kosovo marks the 14th anniversary of independence. Feb. 17, 2008, represents the finalization of the hundreds of years of efforts and sacrifices the hon-

orable people of Kosovo made for freedom and independence.

Twenty-two years after the war for freedom and 14 years after independence, Kosovo is a completely secure, independent and democratic country, with a new energy and spirit toward the future, that is on the way to being integrated with the European Union.

I am honored this year to represent the Republic of Kosovo in Japan, a friendly

country and important ally for us. On this occasion, on this date so important for my country, on my own behalf and that of the citizens and the state of Kosovo, I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to Japan's citizens and government for the assistance and continued support they have shown Kosovo on its path to peace and state-building.

Kosovo has many friends in Japan. Sadako Ogata, the former United Nations high commissioner for refugees, came out in defense of our citizens during the 1998-1999 war in Kosovo. In recognition, the president of Kosovo awarded her the Humanitarian Medal "Mother Teresa." Hisashi Owada, the former president of the International Court of Justice, has led with extraordinary competence the process in The Hague through which the ICJ concluded, on Aug. 22, 2010, that the act of declaring the independence of the Republic of Kosovo is fully in

compliance with international laws.

The excellent relations between our two peoples have been very close and there has been an increase in cooperation in almost all sectors. We will work to further deepen cooperation in the fields of economics, trade, renewable energy and higher education. Kosovo has the youngest population in Europe, democratic and very friendly legislation, and a favorable climate for foreign investment, especially for Japan.

While hoping that the COVID-19 pandemic will end in the near future, I look forward to the return of Japanese tourists to Kosovo, where they will be able to explore a place with an interesting history, special cultural monuments, good skiing trails and rare mountain ranges.

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