

# Greece National Day Special

## Celebrating a long history of shared values

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AMBASSADOR OF GREECE



Greece and Hellenism around the world celebrate today, March 25, as the Hellenic Republic's Independence Day. This landmark anniversary symbolizes the declaration of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1821, which eventually led to the establishment of the modern Greek state in 1830.

Exactly 201 years ago, on March 25, 1821, the people of Greece declared their indepen-

dence, inspired by the ideals of liberty, self-governance and democracy, which were born in ancient Greece and had sparked the French and American revolutions in previous years. The Greek nation fought an uneven, but determined struggle that led to its independence. By every account, it was a remarkable victory of a small and poorly equipped group of insurgents against a mighty power, an outcome against all odds and despite the prevailing international order at the time.

Today, in commemorating the revolution and the subsequent creation of the modern Greek state, and celebrating two centuries of our history, Greeks pay tribute to their ancestors for their sacrifice and to the Philhellenes around the world for their support.

It is a day of immense pride for Greeks and an opportunity to look back into successes and mishaps of the past and draw valuable lessons.

I believe that the state of our country on this 201st anniversary is indeed an occasion for pride as Greece has emerged as an active member of the international community, a strong EU and NATO partner and a nation committed to democratic principles and the rule of law.

Our Independence Day serves also as an acknowledgement of our links with the rest of the world. As the modern Greek state's creation drew inspiration from the world's first democracy, the same ideals have inspired our 201-year partnership and our cooperation with friendly nations and states, actions aimed at promoting international peace, democracy and prosperity.

Japan is one of these nations with which Greece has maintained strong and fruitful relations, for over 120 years, in modern times. Our two nations are closer than the actual geographic distance separating them; both have a long history and rich culture and common aspects of their societies to share. Both Greece and Japan have laid valuable foundations in science, art and philosophy and set standards for others to follow. Japanese and Greeks share a living and loving relationship with the sea and maritime

life. And our countries are today proud and active members of the democratic, rules-based and progressive family of nations committed to the rule of law.

Indeed, in modern times, our links have become stronger thanks to our two governments' cooperation in areas such as politics and economics. This cooperation is particularly important in a fast-changing world that often adversely affects people, especially those in weaker nations and communities. Equally important for our spiritual welfare are our people-to-people contacts in the areas of education, culture, art and tourism. There, again, art and culture, philosophy, social models and lifestyle mutually inspire people in both countries. One wonders if things would have been much different if our two nations were in neighboring areas.

This strong relationship needs to grow in depth and breadth and we should endeavor to achieve that. Today, as we honor a milestone in Greece's history, we look on our shared past and accomplishments, and we are convinced that the common values that have guided our societies for 201 years will help us accomplish even more together in the years to come.

Warm greetings from the Embassy of Greece on our Independence Day.

Long live the friendship of Greece and Japan.



Grigoriou Monastery clings to the side of Mount Athos. GNT0



Knossos Palace in Heraklion, on the island of Crete, dates back to the bronze age. GNT0

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

## Congratulations to the People of Greece on Their Independence Day



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