

Bolivia Independence Day Special

Proud time to reaffirm independence

**NATALIA FERNANDA SALAZAR
BALDERRAMA**
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE
PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA



On this date that is so important to all Bolivians, I want to extend affectionate greetings to my compatriots in Japan and express my warm regards to Their Imperial Highnesses Emperor

Naruhito and Empress Masako, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the government and all the people of Japan.

Since 2006, Bolivia has advanced an economic policy whose purpose is to bring about structural change. This is based on the Economic, Social, Community and Productive Model (MESCP), in which the state plays a leading role by directing and controlling strategic sectors and participating directly in the economy. This model seeks to redistribute wealth and reduce poverty by trans-

ferring the profits made by strategic sectors (especially mining and hydrocarbons) to other sectors that promote income generation and job creation.

It is a priority for the Bolivian state to guarantee food security for our people. This means meeting domestic demand without neglecting the export of products that have great potential due to their quality and the contribution they make to the food supply in our partner countries. Bolivia's trade policy has developed in line with these objectives, adapting to the increased role of the state in economic activities and prioritizing the domestic market.

Implementation of this economic model was cut short by the breach of the constitutional order in 2019. The pernicious administration that ensued caused an economic crisis through bad management of public finances and by mishandling the COVID-19 pandemic. However, thanks to the votes of the Bolivian people, democracy was restored in October 2020. Under the leadership of President Luis Arce and Vice President David Choquehuanca, the MESCP has been reinstated, returning the country to

the path of growth and economic stability. The encouraging results and highly positive economic indicators achieved in just over a year and a half drew international praise.

On the 197th anniversary of Bolivia's independence, historic milestones and major advances are underway. These are aimed at economic growth with social justice that benefits the population as a whole.

In 2021, gross domestic product grew 6.1% and public investment projects received funding of over \$2.6 billion, up 48% from 2020. The economic conditions since put in place have led to the creation of more than 5,300 businesses, an increase of 37% since 2020. The emergence of these businesses enabled a reduction in unemployment from 11.6% in July 2020 to 4.2% this May. To rebuild the economy and combat poverty and inequality, a series of measures has been devised. These include the Hunger Relief Voucher, value added tax refunds for low-income groups, introduction of the wealth tax, and credit for investment projects aimed at industrialization with import substitution. Thanks to the reduction in relative poverty from 39% in



President Luis Arce (left) and Vice President David Choquehuanca
PRESIDENCY OF BOLIVIA

2020 to 36.3% to 2021, and in extreme poverty from 13.7% to 11.1%, Bolivia leads the region as the country that has reduced poverty the most in 2021.

Despite the global crisis, Bolivia has the best price stability in South America. Inflation in June stood at 1.2%, the lowest in the region. This demonstrates the efficiency of the MESCP model, which has managed to return the economy to the path of stability, certainty and hope as rates of growth and poverty reduction reflect the improvement in the Bolivian people's quality of life. We are moving ahead.

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
the Plurinational State of Bolivia
on the Occasion of
the Anniversary of
Their Independence

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