

Poland National Day Special

Dedicated to democracy, freedom, diversity

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AMBASSADOR OF POLAND



Warm greetings to the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of Constitution Day, which is celebrated on the same day by Poland and Japan.

Poland, or rather the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as it used to be known, was the first country in Europe that adopted a modern constitution in 1791. It was a groundbreaking document, the objective of which was to reform the old-fashioned political system and replace it with constitutional monarchy, with more rights and freedoms, including in the political sphere, foreseen for citizens. Its text reflected the main ideas of the Enlightenment period, with emphasis on reason, law, freedom and religious tolerance.

The adoption of the constitution was a major milestone in the development of Polish political and legal thought, thoroughly redefining the organization of the state, its relationship with citizens and

the outside world. Its main tenets have remained present throughout Polish history, even with the country erased from the world's map for over 100 years by its powerful neighbors. The attachment to democracy, freedom and pluralism found its culmination in Poland's political and economic transformation after the fall of communism in 1989, and the subsequent accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999 and the European Union in 2004.

This year marks two important anniversaries — the 25th anniversary of Poland's joining NATO, and the 20th anniversary of our membership in the EU. Both organizations have proven absolutely indispensable in ensuring security, stability and social and economic development for Poland as well as other Central and Eastern European countries.

Poland has done its part to prove on multiple occasions its attachment to the values and principles at the heart of both entities. With the enormous effort of the entire society, in the course of the past three decades, the country has become one of Europe's economic and political powerhouses, with a well-diversified economy resilient to shocks, a sound financial sector, a strong labor market and

a vibrant, increasingly diverse society. No wonder it has become a chosen destination for foreign investors, including those from Japan.

Poland, with its tumultuous, often tragic, past, is also a country with a strong sense of history. Our painful experiences taught us the importance of international law and the order based on it.

We are aware of the threats coming from current developments in our immediate neighborhood. For this reason, Poland was one of the first countries to consistently warn against increasingly aggressive Russian behavior, and, after Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, the first to assist Ukraine in its war effort in multiple ways and forms. This support continues today and will not waver until justice is done and Ukraine wins. It is also a point of convergence, one of many, between Poland and Japan. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank Japan for consistently standing side by side with Ukraine and with other democratic countries in the name of the international order based on law and values.

It goes without saying that Japan and Poland are proven strategic partners with a history of assisting each other in hardship, and working hand in hand toward

further strengthening of our friendship. I am deeply convinced that we will continue this fruitful cooperation in a variety of fields in the years to come.

Let me conclude my reflections by wishing readers a happy Constitution Day.

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



Wroclaw's Market Square is one of the largest in Europe and has been fully pedestrianized since 2000. GETTY IMAGES



Colorful Renaissance facades line the central market square in front of the Fountain of Neptune in Poznan. GETTY IMAGES

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to the People of the Republic of Poland
on Their National Day

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The museum preserves documents of Polish orphans that came to Tsuruga.

Port of Humanity
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City of Tsuruga