
North Macedonia National Day Special

Marking 30 years of friendly cooperation

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On Sept. 8, the Republic of North Macedonia will celebrate the 33rd anniversary of its independence. All these years were filled with many challenges and our struggle for international recognition and NATO and European Union membership.

In 2017, with the Prespa Agreement, the doors were opened to NATO but not to the EU. The realization of this strategic goal remains the task of the new government led by the VMRO DPMNE party from June.

2024 is significant for Macedonia and Japan as we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic

relations on March 1, 1994, an important moment that reminds us of our long-standing cooperation, friendship and aspirations for peace, stability and prosperity.

Over the past 30 years, mutual cooperation has constantly grown. The Republic of North Macedonia greatly appreciates the support Japan gives it both politically and economically. I would especially single out the assistance from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the Japan External Trade Organization. Also, Japan's initiative for cooperation with the Western Balkans aids the development of both North Macedonia and the entire Balkan region.

North Macedonia is open to foreign direct investment, and the free trade agreement the country has with the EU certainly paves the way for Japanese investors who are interested in the European market. Of course, cooperation also takes place in other areas, including culture, education, science and technology, and infrastructure.

Regarding the engagement of Japanese

citizens promoting North Macedonia, I would especially like to thank opera singer Kazuhiro Kotetsu and his Tokyo Orchestra for promoting Macedonian folk music. I am also glad to see the Macedonian language being studied at Takanawa High School in Tokyo, and our culture being promoted by the Japanese-Macedonian friendship association. Also, young students from Chigasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, participate in the Small Montmartre of Bitola international art colony, where every year they are among the award winners.

Next year, I would like to invite everyone to visit our pavilion at the Osaka Expo.

In the end, I can only emphasize my deep conviction that our friendly relations will continue to deepen and intensify in the future to our mutual satisfaction.

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