

# Greece National Day Special

## Enhanced cooperation built on a common worldview

NICOLAOS ARGYROS  
AMBASSADOR OF GREECE



1821. As the ambassador to Japan, I cannot help but reflect on the importance of such a milestone date, and I wish to share some thoughts on Greece's role in the world and its relations with our close ally Japan.

The 1821 Greek Revolution for Independence and the ensuing yearslong fight for the creation of the modern Greek state was historic for both the Greek nation and the European continent. Historic, as it led to the creation of the modern Greek state, internationally recognized as independent in 1830. And historic at the European level

Greece and Greeks around the world commemorate March 25, our National Day, as a day of remembrance of the declaration of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire in

because the Greek nation was the first to pursue its destiny, breaking free from one of the hegemonic empires of the time. This Herculean task could not have succeeded had it not been for the efforts of the Greek diaspora in European and American countries, and the genuine support from sympathetic rulers, governments and thousands of philhellenes all over the world.

Ever since, the Hellenic Republic has been guided by the core values of its law-abiding nation, becoming a member of the European Union and NATO, a staunch advocate of democracy, respect and protection of human dignity, as well as of peaceful coexistence between nations, a beacon of stability in Southeastern Europe at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa.

The millennial history and civilization of Greece offers the world some of its most remarkable ideals and achievements: democracy, history, philosophy, rhetoric, sciences and culture of unparalleled quality. Today's Greece is a vibrant, multifaceted, democratic country which, notwithstanding many obstacles and dif-

icult junctures, has succeeded in preserving its foundational values and principles, catering for the peace and prosperity of its people, Europe and the world.

More recently, in regards to its economy, Greece has regained its investment grade and experienced high growth rates in comparison with fellow members of the European Union, becoming one of the major regional hubs for green energy, with about 57% of our electricity produced from renewable energy sources and investing in energy-storage infrastructure so we can export any surplus to neighboring countries.

Our major industries, tourism and shipping, are flourishing, ranking constantly among the very best internationally in expertise, know-how and innovation. The digital transformation has drastically changed the Greek economic landscape since the COVID pandemic, attracting important foreign companies from both the U.S. (Google, Microsoft) and Japan (NTT). High foreign-language literacy and excellent professional skills in cutting-edge industries have again put Greece on the world map for innovative startups, promoted by both Greek and European funding. In all these fields, cooperation with Japan, an innovative, enterprising, ship-faring nation, is welcome and could bring our countries and people even closer together.

In the political arena, Greece has always had a clear, strong voice as a member of the EU, NATO and the U.N., where, for the current year and 2026, Greece will be taking the torch from Japan and occupying a seat as a nonpermanent member of the Security Council, guided by the proclaimed three ideological pillars of its candidacy — dialogue, diplomacy and democracy.

Greece actively participates in and even



Left: The village of Oia on Santorini Island is known for its beautiful white-washed buildings. Below: The Ancient Theatre of Epidaureus is included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

SANTORINI:GR.  
GREEK NATIONAL  
TOURISM  
ORGANIZATION



leads military EU operations, such as operation EUNAVFOR Aspides in the Red Sea, contributing to safer maritime navigation. A strong political commitment to peace and stability, respect and observance of international law and order, and the active defense of a free and open world are the guiding principles of Greece's foreign policy. Equality, peace, justice and mutual respect are prerequisites for a prosperous and dignified co-existence, as well as efforts to collectively overcome the global challenges our world is currently facing. These are core values Greece shares with Japan.

On the bilateral level, our countries have considerably enhanced cooperation based on our common worldview.

In 2023, thanks to our prime minister's visit to Japan, we elevated our diplomatic relations to a strategic partnership — a framework for further developing our bilateral ties in various fields.

In 2024, Greece and Japan celebrated the 125th anniversary of the establishment of formal relations, together with the Greece-Japan Year of Culture and Tourism. This very special year was graced by the visit of Japan's Princess Kako to Greece in May, and

by the visit of Greek Minister of Tourism Olga Kefalogianni to Japan in September.

Bringing our cultures closer together, 2024 highlighted the common features of kinship that unite Greece and Japan, whether by exploring the affinities between ancient Greek theater and noh theater, or between important literary figures, such as Nikos Kazantzakis and Yakumo Koizumi (Lafcadio Hearn).

I sincerely believe that on today's occa-

sion, as ambassador of Greece to Japan, I have a lot to celebrate — not only my heroic ancestry that laid the foundations for the resilient, peaceful and law-abiding modern Greek state, but also the special strategic partnership linking Greece and Japan, which can and will make our two nations work even closer together for world peace and prosperity.

Long live Greece! Long live the friendship between Greece and Japan!



The Parthenon attracts millions of tourists every year. EMBASSY OF GREECE

# Congratulations to the People of Greece on Their Independence Day

Delivering a Smoke-Free Future



PHILIP MORRIS JAPAN

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<https://www.pmi.com/markets/japan/en/overview>



# Greece National Day Special



Hydra Island is a popular tourist destination. GREEK NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION

## Working to build friendship, economic ties

**YASUYOSHI KARASAWA**  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-GREECE SOCIETY



I extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of Greek National Day.

March 25 symbolizes the anniversary of the declaration of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire in

1821. After nine years of war, Greece was finally recognized as an independent state under the London Protocol of February 1830. Greece's independence and its prosperity today were achieved from the precious sacrifice of many Greek citizens.

Greece is known as the birthplace of Western civilization and exerts influence on people all over the world in various aspects. The polis, or Greek city-state, is

known as a prototype of democracy in the current world. The ancient Olympic Games have been revived as the Festival of Peace. I express my sincere respect to Greece for achieving wonderful growth since independence, for strongly recovering from its financial crisis in the 2010s, for progressing with digitalization and decarbonization, and for enhancing its presence in the European Union. I now hope for the further development of Greece.

The diplomatic relationship between Greece and Japan has steadily grown since June 1899. Recently, when Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited Japan in January 2023, he and then-Prime Minister Fumio Kishida agreed to upgrade our relationship to a strategic partnership. They also declared 2024 as the Greece-Japan Year of Culture and Tourism in addition to celebrating the 125th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Thus our relationship has entered a new

stage toward forming stronger bonds.

Greece and Japan are expected to enhance their friendship and economic relationship this year and beyond. While both have a common feature of excellence in maritime transportation, they also have another common feature of confronting natural disasters such as earthquakes and wildfires. Therefore, it is important for both countries to strengthen their cooperative relationship regarding disaster countermeasures.

The Japan-Greece Society has been actively engaged in the enhancement of friendship and mutual understanding between Japan and Greece since its establishment in 1972. This group will continue various activities to contribute to the strengthening of this relationship. As president, I would like to ask for the continued support and cooperation of all relevant people, including the subscribers of The Japan Times.

## Mutual benefits through maritime strength

**MELINA TRAVLOS**  
PRESIDENT, UNION OF GREEK SHIPOWNERS



Shipping is by nature an international industry. It has been connecting people, economies and cultures since ancient times. It has also cemented close ties between Greece and Japan

for more than 70 years.

Greece is the largest ship-owning nation in the world, accounting for 20% of global fleet capacity. Greek shipowners have also been constantly investing in new, larger and more efficient vessels, being at the forefront of innovation. Japan, on the other

hand, not only boasts one of the largest merchant fleets in the world, but is also home to a leading and innovative shipbuilding industry.

It would not be an exaggeration to state that neither Greek shipping nor Japanese shipyards would have accomplished their achievements without the presence of the other. From the early '50s on, Greek shipowners placed massive orders in Japanese shipyards, each one helping the other become the dominant power in the industry in a few years' time. During certain periods, Japan delivered almost one ocean-going vessel every week to Greek shipowners. This fruitful relationship continues today, with 45 Greek ships being built at Japanese shipyards, accounting for more than 10% of the total orders in the country.

Our close ties with Japan are not limited to shipbuilding. The Greek and Japanese

shipping communities have been collaborating for many years, sharing views and trying to find common ground on how to address the multiple challenges our sector faces. This is also the case today, regarding measures that will contribute to the universal goal of achieving net-zero emissions close to the middle of the century. Not only do both shipping communities agree on the way forward but, perhaps even more importantly, the same proposals are also supported by our respective governments.

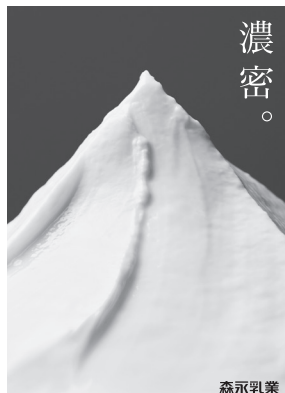
Building on this pertinent issue and, of course, on our historical ties, the Greek shipping community looks forward to sustaining and enhancing its close relationship with Japan for many years to come.

*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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**パルテノ**



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**Congratulations**  
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