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# Finland Independence Day Special

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## Working together to build a better future

**TANJA JAASKELAINEN**  
AMBASSADOR OF FINLAND



Today, on Finland's 108th Independence Day, we also honor the enduring friendship between Finland and Japan.

Japan was among the first to recognize our independence, and over the past

century our cooperation has grown and diversified across many fields. In 2016, we became strategic partners, sharing similar values and facing similar global challenges. This June, President Alexander Stubb and then-Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba adopted a new Joint Statement on Reinforced Cooperation in the Future between Japan and the Republic of Finland. Our collaboration is deeper — and more important — than ever.

As a testimony to this, the exchanges

between our political leaders have surged in recent months. Stubb's visit was preceded by that of Prime Minister Petteri Orpo. Our leaders have addressed close bilateral relations as well as geopolitical challenges, including Russia's war against Ukraine, the security situation in the Indo-Pacific and cooperation on economic security.

Intensifying economic cooperation has been another priority. Japan is already one of Finland's key partners in Asia. Many flagship Finnish companies collaborate with Japan in diverse sectors, from sustainable solutions for the green transition to providing security with cutting-edge technological innovations. The clean energy and digital transitions provide excellent opportunities for further business cooperation.

At the same time, the geopolitical situation requires joint preparedness and resilience-building with the help of emerging technologies, including quantum and space solutions. Defense sector collaboration will remain crucial. Negotiations on an agree-

ment, which will enable smoother transfers of defense equipment and technology between Finland and Japan, are underway.

This Independence Day is also a moment to celebrate the warm friendship between our nations, from the early days of diplomatic recognition to today's vibrant economic partnership. We have built a strong bond of mutual respect and mutual benefit.

I would like to congratulate Japan for organizing a very successful World Expo in Osaka. Finland's participation in the expo has facilitated countless encounters and connections for our citizens, business communities and political leaders. On our National Day at the expo, we were able to further build bridges and strengthen people-to-people connections. Finland and Japan will continue to work together for a better future.

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