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# Slovenia National Day Special

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## Cooperation continues across many fields

**JURIJ RIFELJ**

AMBASSADOR OF SLOVENIA



This year, Slovenia proudly marks the 35th anniversary of its independence. In just three and a half decades, our country has evolved into a stable democracy, an innovative economy

and a respected member of the international community. As we celebrate this important milestone, we also reflect on the values that have guided our journey: dialogue, resilience, sustainability and respect for international law.

One can literally say that Slovenia has started reaching for the stars, or at least for our moon, as a Slovenian company provided all the specialized data acquisition hardware and telemetry software for

NASA's Artemis II mission in April.

In this 35-year period, the relations between Slovenia and Japan have continued to grow. The most important cornerstone is the fact that both countries are strongly committed to a rules-based international order, along the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Also, our economic cooperation has grown substantially in both a quantitative and qualitative sense. Slovenia's innovative edge, provided by its vast engineering knowledge, offers additional room for expanding business ties between Slovenia and Japan.

There is also important cooperation going on in many other fields, such as research, the performing arts and sports. People-to-people ties in the form of partnerships between local communities reinforce these excellent bilateral relations. Last year, the city of Kranj, Slovenia, established a partnership with Fukui. In addition, this year marks 25 years of partner-

ship between the towns of Slovenj Gradec and Myoko, Niigata Prefecture.

The excellently organized Osaka Expo also provided an outstanding platform to further strengthen our bilateral ties. Our pavilion welcomed a substantial number of visitors and partners, exceeding 3.5 million.

As we look ahead, Slovenia remains committed to strengthening its partnership with Japan and contributing to a more sustainable, secure and prosperous world. The anniversary of our independence is not only a celebration of past achievements, but also a reminder of our responsibility to future generations. Together with our Japanese friends and partners, we look forward to building new bridges of cooperation in the years to come.

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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.*