

world/Serbia national day

Bilateral relations with Japan gain in prominence

Ivan Mrkic
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

It is my profound privilege and great pleasure to express my deepest respect, warmest wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and the members of the Imperial family, as well as to Yukio Hatoyama, the prime minister, the government and the friendly people of Japan on this auspicious occasion of the National Day of Serbia. It also gives me the special opportunity to greet the distinguished readers of The Japan Times and to extend my best wishes to Serbian citi-



zens residing in Japan.

The cooperation between Serbia and Japan gained in dynamics in the year behind us and its content was further enriched by the high-level meetings of both countries' officials.

The visit of Vuk Jeremic, the first minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Serbia to officially visit Japan, upon the invitation of Katsuya Okada, minister of foreign affairs of Japan, in October 2009, represents an event of special significance for our bilateral relations. In the ministerial meeting, a number of conclusions for directing our future cooperation were agreed upon. Minister Okada also accepted Minister Jeremic's invitation to visit Serbia.



President of the Republic of Serbia Boris Tadic

During the visit of Minister Jeremic, a Joint Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation was signed, stipulating joint participation in the projects of developing renewable energy sources. This is of special importance to Serbia, having in mind the leading role Japan plays in promoting and effectuating green policy in applying advanced technologies. Minister Jeremic's visit has been mutually assessed as a very successful one, representing an introduction into the forthcoming official visit to Japan of President of the Republic of Serbia Boris Tadic.

Last spring, Bozidar Djelic, Serbia's deputy prime minister for EU integration and minister for science and technological development, visited Japan, having a series of fruitful discussions with the highest representa-

tives of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, as well as in the Cabinet of the prime minister of Japan. Deputy Prime Minister Djelic also had a number of meetings with the presidents of various institutes and universities, discussing the strengthening of our interaction in the fields of science and education, on the basis of an existing bilateral Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology.

Japan is one of the leading and much appreciated donors of grant aid to Serbia, especially in the field of health care, education and transport. Japan's economic assistance to Serbia is about to transform into new, higher forms of cooperation and Japan is now considering financing some very important ecological projects in our country. At the same time, growing interest of Japanese corporations and companies for their stronger presence in the Serbian market has been observed, while Serbia, due to its geographical position and foreign and internal policy, is steadily becoming a destination more and more attractive for foreign capital and investments.

Our bilateral cooperation with Japan continues to develop in many other areas, like culture and art. This month, the famous Serbian National Folk Dance Ensemble Kolo is on tour in Japan



Tradition: The Serbian National Folk Dance Ensemble Kolo is on tour in Japan, performing in Tokyo, Nagoya, Takamatsu, Yamaguchi, Takatsuki, Matsumoto, Kamakura, Sendai Yamagata and many other cities, through March 15.

and will perform in 26 concerts all around the country. This is a unique opportunity for Japanese audiences to enjoy colorful and dynamic performances of traditional Serbian dances and songs.

Also on this occasion, I would like to mention some achievements in the Serbian accession process into the European Union. Last year Serbia effectuated a visa-free regime with EU countries, implemented an Interim Trade Agreement with the EU and, most importantly, Serbia officially presented its candidacy for full-fledged membership in this unique organization, representing the crown of the most suc-

cessful peace, development and civilization project in the history of Europe.

Finally, I wish to stress Serbia's devotion to international law and regional stability. Recently, we have set a historical example by resorting to political and diplomatic means in the case of the unilateral declaration of independence by the Albanian minority in Kosovo, which could have ignited a new turmoil in the Balkans. We are looking forward to the decision of the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the basis of which we shall be furthering our cause and our sovereign and inalienable rights.

We in Serbia are very pleased about the strength and capacity of the foundations built jointly by Serbia and Japan, upon which a prosperous and multidimensional relationship has been projected.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again my gratitude to The Japan Times for giving me the opportunity to address its esteemed readers on this joyous occasion. I would also like to thank all those Japanese friends and associations actively engaged in deepening our mutual understanding and developing our bilateral relations with my best wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the Japanese people, as well as for further deepening of our friendly relations and overall cooperation in the years to come.



Historic visit: Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic meets his counterpart, Katsuya Okada, during his official visit to Japan from Oct. 29 through Nov. 1 last year.

Economic ties continue to flourish

Ichiro Aisawa
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-SERBIA
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia.



Significant progress was made toward Serbia's integration into the European Union during the year 2009. I welcome the news that Serbia formally submitted its application to join the EU in December 2009 and that from the same month Serbian citizens were eligible for visa-free

travel to the Schengen zone.

I am confident that this visible progress for the integration of Serbia into the EU will surely contribute to Serbia's further development, the stability of southeast Europe and, consequently, the expansion of future potential in the economic relations between Japan and Serbia.

The year 2009 was also a very fruitful one for the relationship between Japan and Serbia. In April, Bozidar Djelic, deputy prime minister for EU integration and minister of science and technological development visited Japan. The visit of Vuk Jeremic, minister of foreign affairs, in October was the first by a Serbian foreign minister to Japan since the formation of the Republic of Serbia.

Serbia is at the heartland of the Balkan Peninsula and functions as the center of regional trade and traffic, thus, at the strategic crossroad. The fertile country is also abundant in highly educated workers and rich in mineral resources. Japanese companies are increasingly interested in Serbia and a business environment research mission by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) was sent to Serbia in November 2009.

I sincerely hope that the above-mentioned developments in the last year will lead Serbia to become one of the emerging countries in the world economy in the very near future and its bilateral relations with Japan in various fields will be developed further.



Holy site: The Patriarchate of Pec, built in the 13th century in Kosovo, is the main seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church and was listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage in Danger in 2006. EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Serbia takes big steps toward EU

Takehiro Togo
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-SERBIA FRIENDSHIP
ASSOCIATION

I would like to express hearty congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia.



Last year, Serbia took several important steps, politically and economically, that promise a better future for Serbia toward integration into the European Community.

Politically, discussions have started in the International Court of Justice on the legality of the declaration of independence of Kosovo. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia appreciated the continued better cooperation of Serbia, leading the EU Council to lift the suspension of the Transitional Trade Agreement with Serbia. The waiving of visa requirements for Serbians visiting EU countries took effect on Dec. 19, 2009. Three days later,

Serbia submitted its formal application for membership of the EU, which was appraised by the prime minister of Sweden as an important step not only for Serbia but for the entire region, and who indicated 2010 as the year for Serbia's candidacy for EU and 2014 for full membership.

Economically, the president of the central bank of Serbia predicted a lower rate of inflation, the recovery of exports and the extension of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund that will stabilize the financial sector. The EU's European Investment Bank has made grants for the improvement of financial, social and scientific areas as well as for small and medium enterprises. These grants were made to show the determination to assist Serbia for integration into the EU and solidarity with the countries affected by the world financial crisis.

These are all very important developments not only for Serbia but for all the West Balkan region, which is rich in

common cultural heritage and industrial capacity.

Bilateral relations with Japan also were strengthened by the visit of Deputy Prime Minister Bozidar Djelic and Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic. The Japan-Serbia Friendship Association will make all efforts for better friendship and cooperation between Japan and Serbia.

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Serbia
on the Occasion of Their National Day

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Congratulations to the Republic of Serbia

KINCHO mosquito coil (the world's first mosquito coil)

Pyrethrum flowers are the source of 'pyrethroid'-a key insecticide component. Serbia is home to such pyrethrum flowers, and the insecticide manufacturer,

'KINCHO', has an additional bond with Serbia.

Mr. Naohide Ueyama, KINCHO president, serves as Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Serbia in Osaka.

The Pioneer of Household Insecticide in Japan

Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Serbia
on the Occasion
of
their National Day

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Congratulations on the National Day
Best wishes to the Republic of Serbia

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