

Belarus independence day

Striving for long-lasting partnership with Japan

Vyacheslav Beskosty
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF BELARUS

Dear colleagues and friends, it is a great honor for me to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus that is celebrated July 3.



Fifteen years have passed since the government of Belarus made a decision to open the embassy of our country in Tokyo. At the same time in 1995 the first diplomatic mission of Japan was opened in

Minsk, the capital of Belarus. These events marked the new stage in the relations of our friendly nations and laid the ground for the promotion of exchanges between Belarusian and Japanese people.

Nowadays we are facing a greater interest of businesses of the two countries toward the opportunities of bilateral trade and investments. Though I believe that we still have much to do to fully realize the potential of cooperation in the economic field. The Republic of Belarus is interested in Japanese investments and technologies needed to modernize our industries. We are also eager to expand exports

of unique and high-quality Belarusian goods to Japan. Tokyo Instruments has a good experience of creating successful joint ventures in Belarus. Today two companies in Minsk produce precise laser measuring equipment and export them to Japan.

In 2009 we started active work with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation in the field of financing technological imports in Belarus. Marubeni Corp. is one of the first companies using JBIC credit lines for delivering equipment on Belarusian chemical enterprises. All these investment activities of Japanese companies can be

protected by Nippon Export and Investment Insurance. The Memorandum of Understanding between NEXI and Belarusbank was signed in December 2009 for the sake of further development of investment and trade between our countries.

Taking this opportunity I would like to announce that the Belarus Investment Forum will be held in November 2010 in cooperation with ROTOB. The forum will take place in Tokyo and will help to promote investment opportunities among Japanese companies. It will be a good chance for all participants to get acquainted with Belarus-

ian and Japanese business communities.

We enjoy not only good bilateral relations but also share a common view on the most important matters on the international agenda, striving for lasting peace and friendship in the world. It is my strong opinion that our countries and governments have to intensify their collaboration in order to create a safer and cleaner global environment for the future generations.

On this auspicious occasion I would like to wish the readers of The Japan Times success and happiness, as well as peace and prosperity to all people of Japan.



Picturesque capital: A view of the central area of Minsk EMBASSY OF BELARUS

Absorbing the best of all cultures while preserving its natural beauty



Agriculture: Apple blossoms in a garden

Geographically, the Republic of Belarus is located in the heart of Europe between two great neighboring nations — Russia in the east and Poland in the west. Situated at the crossroads of the ancient routes from Byzantine to Scandinavia, Belarus has absorbed the best accomplishments and achievements of various cultures. Ancestors of present Belarusians have made a significant contri-

bution to world heritage.

Belarus possesses a valuable potential of natural, historical, architectural and ethnic resources, along with a rich cultural heritage. The tender and poetic nature of Belarus befits this country in the best way. Bright colors of the Mediterranean region are not characteristic of Belarus. It does not have the stunning exoticism of Africa or delicate slyness of the East either. Belarus is the country of modest and, one would even say, intelligent beauty. Its quiet charm penetrates into the traveler's soul gradually, through a soft play of the morning sky over the vague horizon; through the velvet verdure of the vast expanses of the fields; through the overpowering balmy air of a

century-old pine forest; through the tender mooing of cows and sad cries of cranes in the meadows. The elusive beauty of Belarus does not expose itself to everyone; for this you have to stop and feel the surrounding world: keep looking into the blue eyes of Belarus, its deep lakes, put down your hands into icy waters of a ringing brook, hide from a warm rain under a shaggy branch of a spruce. Perhaps this is one of the few remaining places on our planet where one can see the amazing miracle — the miracle of untouched nature. It is surprising that right here, in the very center of Europe, time seems to have considerably slowed down its run — the 21st century is raging around, civilization is progressing with long

strides, yet in Belarus nature remains real, people remain human and values remain eternal. Belarus is an island of calmness in the swirl of seething time, a place of wise harmony of body and soul.

The best way to estimate the forest resources of Belarus is to have a look at them from an airplane window — from a height it becomes quite obvious that more than a third of its territory seems to be covered

with a green blanket. Here there have been preserved the major forest areas in Europe. To a great extent Belarus is "the lungs of Europe." However, in addition to their utilitarian value, Belarusian woods are also a cultural wealth due to their unique and, in some places, untouched beauty. One can enjoy it by visiting forest reserves in Belarus. The most famous national park is Belovezha forest preserve, where

the conservation regimen was introduced as early as in the beginning of the 15th century. Here you can see meadows, woods and rivers in a state that could remain only without man's interference — powerful, crystal clear and wonderful. And, certainly, you will get unforgettable impressions while meeting a "zubr" (a wisent or Belarusian bison) — an animal that has become the symbol of Belarus.



Architectural heritage: A church on the banks of the Zapadnaya Dvina River

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Belarus
on the Occasion of Their Independence Day

TII TOKYO INSTRUMENTS, INC.

Web site: <http://www.tokyoinst.co.jp/>

6-18-14 Nishikasai, Edogawa-ku, Tokyo 134-0088
Phone +81-3-3686-4711 Fax +81-3-3686-0831

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