

Turkey national day/world

Long history ties eastern and western ends of Asia

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AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY

The Turkish nation is celebrating this Oct. 29 the 87th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey. On this special day, we pay tribute to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the first president of the republic, whose principles and achievements still remain a source of inspiration and guidance for Turkey.



Turkey stands as an embodiment of her founding father's ideals and vision: a secular democracy, an active member of the European and Euro-Atlantic community pursuing full membership in the European Union, and a dynamic market economy supported by a vibrant private sector and a young population.

The Republic of Turkey, since its establishment, has been pursuing a peaceful and

consistent foreign policy guided by the principle of peace at home and peace abroad set out by Ataturk. The primary objective of our foreign policy is to help secure a peaceful, prosperous, stable and cooperative international environment that is conducive to human development at home and abroad. In order to attain its national and international objectives, Turkey has adhered to the principles of good relations and cooperation with its neighbors and all countries, and has contributed to international peace, stability, security and prosperity.

In the fragile international environment of today, concepts such as democratization, pluralism, sustainable development, human development, intercultural understanding and the building of harmony and tolerance among cultures are gaining priority and importance. The need to bring solutions to the problems on the basis of international law and effective multilateralism is becoming

more evident than ever.

Turkey perceives Japan as a natural ally and a reliable partner in its efforts to contribute to the international peace and stability. Turkey and Japan, located on the eastern and western edges of the Asian continent, share similar ideals and common values such as peace, democracy, human rights, stability and prosperity for all human kind. Both countries also have similar approaches toward various international issues. As two temporary members of the United Nations Security Council, enhanced cooperation between Turkey and Japan on the basis of those ideals and values will be instrumental in terms of promoting and sustaining international peace.

Beginning with the early contacts between the Ottoman and the Meiji empires in the late 19th century, Turkey and Japan have enjoyed friendly relations. The historic friendship between the two nations actually began with a disaster. After an official visit to Japan, the Ottoman Navy frigate Ertugrul departed Yokohama on Sept. 16, 1890. However, the vessel encountered a strong storm near Wakayama and was crushed into the rocks off the small village of Kushimoto, killing 587 crew members, including Adm. Osman, the commander of Ertugrul, in this tragic incident. Sixty-nine sailors survived and were cared for by Japanese fishermen. This has led to strong emotional bonds and friendship between the two countries.

As a symbol of the existing friendship between the Turkish and the Japanese peoples, and in order to deepen the relations between the two countries, the year 2010 has been officially declared as the Year of Japan in Turkey. During the course of the year, various cultural activities have been organized in which aspects of Japanese culture are introduced to Turkish people through the events held in different cities in Turkey. For Turkey, Japan represents a successful combination of a great civilization and tradition with remarkable economic and technological achieve-



Turkish flower: Tulips, native to Central Asia and Turkey, bloom in the garden of the Topkapi Palace, which was the primary residence in Istanbul of the sultans in the 15th to 19th centuries.

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ments. Many people in Turkey feel that they can learn much from the experience of Japan, which has successfully modernized itself while maintaining its own unique culture.

Recognizing the importance of tourism in mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples, the governments of Turkey and Japan have also designated the year 2010 as the Japan-Turkey Tourism Exchange Year. At the crossroads of many cultures and civilizations that bring the East and the West together, Turkey attracts millions of tourists every year from all over the world. In recent years, we have happily witnessed a steady increase in the number of Japanese tourists visiting Turkey. Among others, Capadocia, Pamukkale and Istanbul especially have become the most favorite destinations visited by the Japanese guests. Yet, Turkey has a lot more to offer. Taking this opportunity, I would like to invite all our Japanese friends to visit and discover Turkey.

Intensifying our economic, financial and commercial cooperation with Japan is another priority for us. Indeed,

there is much room for improvement in this area. Turkey is an important economic power in its region. Our friendly relations with different actors in our region pave the way to further economic and commercial relations with a wide variety of countries. Today, our trade with Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Africa is constantly growing. Turkish companies take part in many large-scale projects in Central Asia, Russia, the Middle East and North Africa. We are eager to cooperate with Japan particularly in infrastructure and construction projects in those regions. Moreover, we are glad to see an increasing interest from Japanese companies to invest more in Turkey. In parallel with Turkey's growing economy, we are improving our own infrastructure. Energy, among other fields, seems to be one of the most promising sectors in Turkey to invest.

Turkey, as a "booming" economy with a cumulative gross domestic product (GDP) increase of 143 percent between 2003 and 2008, and having a very young population and a fast-growing domestic market, is centrally lo-

ated at the center of Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East. It is an important energy terminal and corridor connecting the East and the West. It enjoys a liberal and reformist investment climate with a dynamic and mature private sector.

I sincerely believe that Turkey and Japan, sharing the same values and ideals, and having common political and economic interests, should develop a firmer and more dynamic relationship in order to address various challenges that the international community faces today. I have no doubt that such an intensified cooperation between our nations will benefit not only Turkey and Japan, but will also contribute to international peace, harmony and prosperity at large.

With this conviction, in my capacity as the Ambassador of Turkey, I would like to reiterate my commitment to continue to work vigorously to further strengthen and develop the existing ties of friendship and cooperation between our two countries. I would like to take this opportunity to wish happiness and continued prosperity to the friendly people of Japan.



Ancient civilization: The Library of Celsus in Ephesus (Efes in Turkish) is one of few remaining examples of Roman-influenced architecture.

Congratulations

on the Occasion of the 87th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of Turkey

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Cultural mix: Originally built as a cathedral, the Hagia Sophia (Aya Sofya in Turkish) was a mosque from 1453 to 1934 before becoming a museum in 1935.

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Congratulations

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

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