

Paraguay national day

Paraguay marks bicentennial Independence Day

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AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF
PARAGUAY

The Republic of Paraguay celebrates its bicentennial Anniversary of Independence and National Day on May 14 and 15, 2011. On this Independence Day, we gratefully recall Capt. Pedro Juan Caballero and the many leaders of the liberation movement who achieved independence without any bloodshed in 1811.



On this momentous anniversary, we take this opportunity to offer our respectful and sincere best wishes of health and well being to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and all the members of the Imperial Family, as well as convey our heartiest and warmest greetings to H.E. Prime Minister Naoto Kan and to the Japanese government and people.

We also take this opportunity to extend our deepest and sin-

cere condolences to the victims and families in the recent Great East Japan Earthquake. The thoughts and prayers of all Paraguayan citizens remain with the survivors of this great tragedy and the Japanese people, and join in the sincere hopes for a swift recovery from the devastation that ensued following the massive earthquake and tsunami. The Republic of Paraguay's president, minister of foreign affairs, president of the Congress, and the president of the Supreme Court of Justice all expressed their deepest sympathies and support soon after the earthquake, and the first lady of the Republic of Paraguay also conveyed these feelings to Her Imperial Majesty Empress Michiko.

The government of Paraguay offered the assistance of a special rescue team, which had worked in Haiti following the earthquake in 2010, but because of the particular conditions and needs in the devastated areas, this assistance did not come to fruition. On the other hand, other help poured in from the Paraguayan private sector. Of note is the donation

of 1 million individually packed boxes of tofu made from Paraguayan non-transgenic soybeans and distributed directly to the victims of the earthquake and tsunami; the production and distribution cost of which was jointly financed by the Paraguayan government and some private organizations in Paraguay.

We are absolutely certain that the victims suffering from this great calamity will overcome the many difficulties and

challenges by virtue of their wisdom and esprit de corps. The Japanese people have shown us their incredible moral virtues, resilience and stoicism, and kept absolute calm during and after the massive earthquake with a complete absence of panic. As citizens rushed to purchase bottled water and supplies thinned amid news of potential radioactivity from the Fukushima nuclear plant, the price of bottled water remained stable in an incredible demon-

stration of societal civility and moral cohesion.

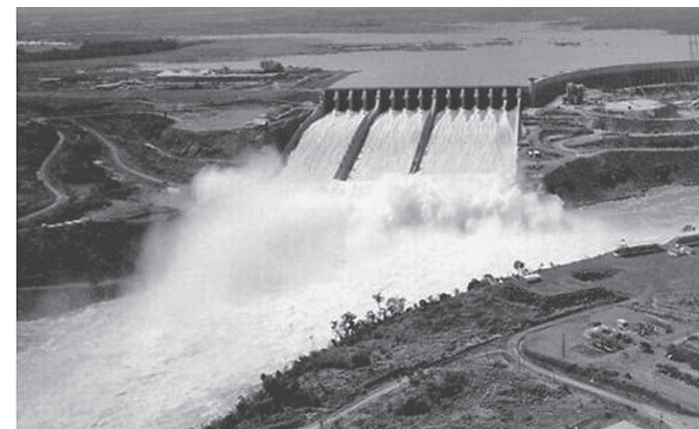
Paraguay's strong relationship with Japan dates back to 1919, when the first treaty of amity was signed between the two nations. In 1936, the first 81 Japanese immigrants landed in Paraguay and settled in La Colmena, 130 km southeast of Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. The advent of World War II interrupted the flow of immigration thereafter, which resumed in 1954 a little while after the conclusion of the war in 1945. With the aid of the Paraguayan and Japanese government, the immigration continued and today over 7,000 Japanese and their immediate descendants now live in several parts of the country. Most Japanese immigrants engaged in agriculture and introduced tomatoes and many garden vegetables not commonly known or widely consumed before in Paraguay. In later years, many of the Japanese-Paraguayan farmers began growing soybeans, a staple from their native country. Soybean production is today the most important product produced and ex-

ported, and Paraguay is the fourth largest soybean exporter in the world.

The Japanese immigrants and their descendants' arduous and intensive work and efforts to prepare the land for agriculture with little or no mechanized tools contributed greatly to the advancement of modern agriculture in the country and the overall development and growth of the Paraguayan economy. They have earned deep appreciation and respect from their Paraguayan counterparts as honest and hardworking people.

On the other hand, the Japanese government has greatly aided Paraguay's socioeconomic development in the fields of infrastructure, health and education in the form of special financial loans, free financial aid, technical training and assistance.

The Imperial Family has also greatly contributed to further enhance the excellent bilateral relations, blessing the country with numerous visits. Their Imperial Majesties, then Crown Prince Akihito and Crown Princess Michiko, visited Para-



Renewable energy: Itaipu Dam, on the Parana River on the border of Paraguay and Brazil, is one of the largest hydroelectric facilities in the world. EMBASSY OF PARAGUAY

guay for the first time in 1978. In 1986, Their Imperial Highnesses Prince Hitachi and Princess Hanako visited to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Japanese Immigration to Paraguay. In 1999, Their Imperial Highnesses Prince Takamado and Princess Hisako visited us for the South American Soccer Tournament. And in 2006, His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino visited Paraguay to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Japanese Immigration. The Imperial family members as well as many representatives of the Japanese government have always been warmly welcomed and appreci-

ated by the citizens of Paraguay and share fond memories of their visits over the last 30 years.

Lastly, as ambassador of the Republic of Paraguay in Japan, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Japanese government and people for their hospitality and support. I am very happy to be able to celebrate the bicentennial Anniversary of our Independence Day together with my fellow Paraguayan citizens who live in Japan alongside our Japanese friends, and share the joy and depth of our friendship and respect, especially during these difficult times in our host nation.



Close ties: A Japan-Paraguay Immigration Agreement was concluded in 1959. EMBASSY OF PARAGUAY

Congratulations

to the Republic of Paraguay
on the 200th Anniversary
of Independence

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Congratulations

to the People of
the Republic of Paraguay
on the 200th Anniversary
of Their Independence

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Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Paraguay
on the Occasion of the 200th Anniversary
of Their Independence Day