

Turkey national day

Ever-growing strong bonds of friendship with Japan

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AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TURKEY

It is a great pleasure for me to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 89th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest greetings to our Japanese friends as well as the Turkish community living in Japan.



We are today celebrating the 89th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey. The Turkish nation, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, gained victory with great struggles and sacrifices in its fight for ending the foreign occupation after World War I, and declared the establishment of the republic on Oct. 29, 1923. After almost nine decades of a steady walk, Turkey now stands as an embodiment of founding father Mustafa Kemal Atatürk'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.

Turkey as a social law state has a proactive foreign policy on the basis of the principle of peace at home, peace in the world, has a democratic rule with its functioning institutions and regulations, and a strong economy that are the most important achievements of our nation. Turkey, the world's 16th and Europe's sixth biggest economy, continues to produce

and grow with stability. Another outstanding feature of Turkey is that it pursues a rational and realistic foreign policy and displays relentless efforts for stability, peace and prosperity across the world. Turkey also assumes active roles for the resolution of conflicts with its solution-oriented policies.

Turkey is located at the crossroads of critical regions for global and regional stability, such as the Middle East, Balkans, Caucasus, Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Through its unique geo-strategic location and its close historical and cultural ties with both Asia and Europe, Turkey also plays an important role in the political dialogue between East and the West. Its huge local market, EU accession prospects, young, dynamic and educated workforce, international business practices and managerial skills of its manpower as well as a good infrastructure network are also valuable assets for Turkey.

Turkey and Japan are situated on the western and eastern ends of Asia, at the opposite edges of the historic Silk Road. They have had traditionally good relations since the 19th century. Relations between Turkey and Japan gained momentum after the imperial Ottoman frigate Ertugrul sank off the coast of Kushimoto in 1890. Ertugrul disaster led to the establishment of strong emotional bonds and friendship not only between the two states but also between our two peoples. Our close cooperation after the earthquakes in Japan and Turkey last year reflected the solidarity between Turkish and Japanese nations. Atsushi Miyazaki, who lost his life during an aftershock in Van, while he was trying to alleviate the sufferings of the great Van earthquake, will always be



Cosmopolitan: The Bosphorus Bridge and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge are two structures in Istanbul that span the strait connecting Europe and Asia. **Right:** Located in the middle of the European bank of the Bosphorus, Ortakoy hosts many different religious buildings, including the Ottoman neo-Baroque-style Ortakoy Mosque. TURKISH EMBASSY OFFICE OF THE CULTURAL AND INFORMATION COUNSELOR

remembered as a symbol of friendship between Japan and Turkey.

Today, Turkey and Japan enjoy friendly relations in all fields. No conflict exist between Turkey and Japan in bilateral political relations. Turkey and Japan share similar ideals and common values such as peace, democracy, rule of law, stabil-

ity and prosperity for all human kind. Both countries also have similar approaches toward various international issues. 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.

In order to deepen bilateral



relations, we give the utmost importance to cultural exchanges. In this respect, we believe that tourism contributes significantly to the mutual understanding and friendship between our peoples. We have happily witnessed that the number of Japanese tourists visiting Turkey has exceeded 200,000 annually.

Moreover, we are glad to see

an increasing interest from Japanese companies to invest more in Turkey. In the last few years, important projects have been undertaken by several Japanese companies. Energy, among other fields, seems to be one of the most promising sectors in Turkey to invest.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate, as

the ambassador of Turkey, my commitment to contribute to the further strengthening and developing of the existing ties of friendship and cooperation between Turkey and Japan. Our countries, sharing similar values and ideals, and having common political and economic interests, should develop a more tangible and more dynamic relationship

to address various international challenges that the international community faces today. I have no doubt that such an intensified cooperation between our two nations will not only be to the benefit of Turkey and Japan, but will also contribute to the strengthening of international peace, harmony and prosperity at large.



Citadel: In the rock sites of Cappadocia, a popular tourist destination due to the unique geological and cultural features, Uchisar is the highest point, from where visitors can enjoy the spectacular panoramic view. TANSU GURPINAR



Unreal landscape: Pamukkale, literally "cotton castle," in southwestern Turkey contains hot springs and travertine terraces created by heavily mineralized water flowing from springs. On top of this outstanding natural site an exceptional example of an ancient thermal installation of the Greco-Roman city of Hierapolis was established. The complex was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1988. TURKISH EMBASSY OFFICE OF THE CULTURAL AND INFORMATION COUNSELOR

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

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