

## Iran national day

## Iran, Japan keen to boost bilateral cooperation

Reza Nazar Ahari  
AMBASSADOR OF IRAN

On the auspicious occasion of the 35th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of



Iran and the national day of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to present my sincerest heartfelt regards to Their Majesties Emperor Akhito and Empress Michiko, the royal family and the government and people of Japan. I am also pleased to express my cordial congratulations to my compatriots living in Japan.

Iran is one of the world's oldest major civilizations. The first Iranian dynasty formed in 2800 B.C. and was unified into an empire in 625 B.C. Iran's natural scenery is truly diverse. The country is blessed with both mountains and seashores and its climate varies richly from place to place and with each passing season. The beauty of nature and the wonder it inspires are expressed not only in Persian literature and poetry but also admired by globally well-known great poets and scholars. Located in Southwest Asia, Iran has an area of more than 1,648,000 sq. km and a population of 76 million, mostly young and educated.

The glorious Islamic revolution of Iran triumphed on Feb. 11, 1979, under the leadership of the eminent late Imam Khomeini, terminating a despotic rule and establishing a new model of democracy in harmony with Islamic values and principles. Promotion of relations with other nations based on mutuality of interests and noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries have continued to be the main pillars of our international relations. Notwithstanding, the Islamic Republic had to defend itself from 8 years of imposed war and many other unjust and internationally illegal confrontations. Today Iran is a major power in the Middle East working for the peace and prosperity of this sensitive region. Iran has been actively involved in crisis management of both interstate as well as intrastate conflicts beyond its borders. The salience of Iran's peace efforts in its foreign policy has been vividly demonstrated in Afghanistan since the U.S.-led strike on Afghanistan in late 2001. Another important example is the Islamic Republic of Iran's contribution and readiness to use its good office for ending hostilities in Syria.

In terms of foreign policy, the government is discarding extreme approaches. We seek effective and constructive diplomatic relations with a focus on mutual confidence-building with our neighbors and other regional and international players. We will work to strengthen our ties with traditional and new partners. The election last year, in which close to 75 percent of eligible voters turned out, showed how our religious democracy is maturing. Iran's ancient culture and civilization, state continuity, geopolitical position, social stability amid regional turmoil

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei,  
supreme leader of the Islamic  
Republic of Iran

and well-educated youth enable us to look to the future with confidence, and aspire to assume a major global role. Based on this policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been trying to improve its bilateral and multilateral relations with European and North American countries on the basis of mutual respect.

Another salient aspect of the peace loving and moderation policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran's government is the approval by the United Nations of the WAVE Act, which was based on President Rouhani's proposal. The WAVE Act calls on all nations across the globe to denounce violence and extremism. Under the resolution, the General Assembly would urge all member states to unite against violent extremism in all forms and manifestations, as well as sectarian violence. It would encourage efforts by leaders to discuss within their communities the causes of violent extremism and discrimination, and evolve strategies to address them. It would also recommend the promotion of community engagement in countering violent extremism, including through strengthening ties between communities and emphasizing common bonds and interests.

**Peaceful nuclear program**

The fundamental nuclear policy of Iran has always been clearly stressed by Iranian high officials and particularly the Supreme Leader. Iran's atomic program is meant for peaceful purposes only, such as power generation and medical isotopes. According to the Fatwa (religious decree) issued by the Supreme Leader and based on the strategic needs of Iran, nuclear weapons have no place in our national security doctrine and are even detrimental to our national security. Iran, as a victim of mass destruction weapons, has always insisted on the global disarmament of nuclear weapons and, as a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) from July 1, 1968, has always respected its commitments and aimed at banning nuclear tests. Therefore, I am pleased to see that a deal was finally reached on the nuclear issue. A six-nation group, made up of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany (P5+1), and the Islamic Republic of Iran in January, agreed to start implementing the terms of the historic interim Geneva Joint Plan of Action of Nov

Hassan Rouhani, president  
of the Islamic Republic of  
Iran

24, 2013, from Jan. 20, 2014. The Iranian parliament welcomed these developments and a final deal is to be struck within a six-month period.

Finally, Iran &amp; the P5+1 finalized the agreement on how to implement the Joint Plan of Action and the two sides came to a single interpretation on how to put the agreement into effect. Following this deal, Iran halted production of 20 percent enriched uranium on Jan. 20, marking the entry into force of the landmark deal with the P5+1 on its peaceful nuclear program and both the European Union and United States announced they were easing sanctions on Iran. Implementation of the nuclear deal also started the clock on negotiating a long-term accord to end the nuclear standoff. The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed Iran has ceased enriching uranium above five percent fissile purities at its enrichment facilities. It added that Iran was also converting its stockpile of medium-enriched uranium and is not conducting any further advances to its activities at its nuclear sites. Following these developments the EU foreign policy chief, who represents the P5+1, said she would meet representatives of the major powers to press for further negotiations with Iran for a comprehensive solution, building on the momentum and moving toward significant dialogue and negotiation. As part of the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, the EU Council suspended certain EU restrictive measures against Iran for a period of six months. The U.S. Secretary of State also approved a waiver to ease the sanctions, and Washington hailed Iran's actions as an important step forward. This decision has lifted the prohibition on the provision of insurance and transport in relation to Iranian crude oil sales to its current customers as well as the ban on the import, purchase or transport of Iranian petrochemical products and related services. To enable the transport of Iranian crude oil and petrochemical products, the prohibition on the provision of vessels is also suspended. The ban on trade in gold and precious metals with the Iranian government, its public bodies and the Central Bank of Iran has also been suspended. As foreseen by the Joint Plan of Action, the thresholds for authorizing financial transfers to and from Iran have been increased tenfold in order to ease

trade with Iran.

President Rouhani in his speech, described as a message of friendship and hope by the Davos World Economic Forum 2014 organizers, unveiled a proposal to create a new multilateral body tasked with stabilizing global energy supplies. Rouhani said Iran was ready to put some of its extensive oil and gas reserves at the disposal of the proposed new body. He also declared Iran's preparedness to engage in a serious process to establish a reliable institution for this long-term partnership.

**Relations with Japan**

Iran and Japan are located in the west and east of Asia and although their geographic distance is relatively far, their relationship goes back to ancient times. The two countries have fostered close affinities based on their Asian heritage. Both countries share a global vision of peace and prosperity. The two countries established official diplomatic relations 85 years ago, and from the end of World War II, Iran-Japan trade has expanded. Japan was interested in Iranian oil and its market, while Iran considered Japan as an important oil consumer and a source for the procurement of industrial goods. A notable symbol of these relations was the agreement between Idemitsu Oil Company and the National Iranian Oil Company in November 1952 to import Iranian oil by the famous oil tanker Nissho Maru. The 60th anniversary of this event was praised by Japanese media in 2013.

The parliamentary and governmental exchanges that have taken place since the inauguration of President Rouhani's administration have resulted in the establishment of diverse spheres of cooperation. Among them, I would like to mention the visit by Masahiko Komura, special envoy of the prime minister of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Iran in September. He held talks and exchanged views regarding Japan-Iran bilateral and international affairs. Also in September, President Rouhani and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held a summit meeting in New York and both pledged they will aim at constructive cooperation bilaterally and in the international arena. Another important exchange between senior high officials of the two countries was the visit of Fumio Kishida, the Japanese foreign minister, to Tehran in November. Foreign Minister Kishida voiced Japan's willingness to exchange views with Iran in regard to the crises in Syria and Afghanistan, as well as establishing peace and security in the region. He also expressed that Japan was optimistic about nuclear negotiations between Iran and the P5+1. In a meeting with Dr. Zarif, the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign minister, the two sides voiced their readiness to bolster cooperation on consular affairs, human rights and political issues in addition to increased exchanges of university students and professors. In continuation of these exchanges, I would like to inform the respected readers that Tehran and Tokyo have finalized an ex-



Heritage: Located in western Iran, Taq-e Bostan (arch of Bostan), which dates back to the time of the Sassanid Empire of Persia, is a site with a series of large rock reliefs, which have survived almost 1,700 years of wind and rain. EMBASSY OF IRAN

tradition treaty that is set to come into effect in the near future. I should also mention that the Ninth Japan-Iran Human Rights Dialogue was held in September in Tehran. In this dialogue, both sides exchanged views to promote and protect human rights and cooperate at the United Nations.

We are also pursuing new grounds for our cultural cooperation. In this regard, in October, the Embassy of Japan in Tehran, in cooperation with Japan Foundation, organized the Japan Culture Week in Tehran. For the opening ceremony of this inaugural event, which was held at the Niavaran Cultural Complex, Noriko Ogawa, the Japanese pianist, performed a variety of pieces, which were watched by enthusiastic spectators. She also appeared in two recitals and a concerto performance with Tehran Philharmonic Orchestra in Shiraz and Tehran.

I would like to add that Iran's cultural heritage with a history of 7,000 years has been partly demonstrated in famous museums throughout the world. As a result of the prevailing atmosphere, Iran has launched initiatives to encourage tourists from around the globe to travel to the country to visit well-known Iranian sites and historical monuments in the country. The scattered historical monuments throughout the country have created an excellent opportunity to appeal to many types of tourists. The main tourist destinations in Iran are Persepolis, Shiraz, Isfahan, Yazd, Kashan, Hamadan, the Caspian Sea area and the Kish island free trade zone. I am fully committed to doing my best to further boost Iran and Japan long-standing, cordial ties and to strengthen our cooperation in all areas for the benefit of our peoples and countries. The embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tokyo

is disposed to provide detailed information about tourism in my country and facilitate the visits of the friendly people of Japan to

Iran. I hope the year 2014 will be a landmark year for the Islamic Republic of Iran's relationship with Japan.

Strong friendship to continue  
expanding international cooperationMasahiko Komura  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-IRAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On the auspicious occasion of 35th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, I have great pleasure to convey on behalf of the members of the Japan-Iran Parliamentarians' Friendship League my warmest felicitations to the government and the people of Iran.

Iran and Japan are ancient civilizations with deep-rooted cultural, political and economic relations. As a special envoy of the prime minister, I had the opportunity to visit Tehran last September, and held talks with Iranian high-ranking officials and members of parliament. I hope, through joint parliamentary cooperation, we will witness ever stronger ties between the two nations in all areas and contribute further to international peace and security.



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