

# Serbia national day

## Looking to strengthen bilateral cultural, economic relationships

Nenad Glišić  
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I., EMBASSY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

It is my great pleasure and honor to express my deepest admiration and respect to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the members of the Imperial family, as well as to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and friendly people of Japan, on the occasion of the National Day of Serbia. I would also like to take this opportunity to greet respected readers of The Japan Times and to extend my best wishes to Serbian citizens residing in Japan.

Friendly ties between our two countries have a long history. This year we mark 132 years since the king of Serbia Milan Obrenović, by sending his personal letter in 1882, informed Emperor Meiji about Serbia becoming an internationally recognized state at the Berlin Congress in 1878, and about himself becoming Serbian king. Emperor Meiji replied and this exchange of letters between two sovereigns represents the first official communication between Serbia and Japan.

Serbia looks at Japan as one of its most important partners and friends, and gives high priority to further strengthening bilateral ties in all fields, including economy, culture, science, sports and people to people exchanges. Having in mind good political relations with Japan, Serbia is focusing on developing economic ties by trying to show major Japanese companies, investors and tourists the possibilities and opportunities that Serbia has to offer.

Regarding its path toward the EU, a historic step was made this January when the European

Council confirmed the decision of EU ministers on the opening of accession negotiations with our country. This marks a new phase in relations between Serbia and the EU and gives a further impetus to the implementation of reforms, to which the Serbian government is fully committed. Having in mind the importance the Japanese business community attributes to the EU integrations, we sincerely hope that the newest developments will encourage Japanese companies to seek further opportunities in Serbia.

Concerning Japan-Serbia relations, Japan's Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nobuo Kishi visited Serbia at the end of last year and had fruitful meetings with President Tomislav Nikolić, Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivan Mrkić and other high level officials. We sincerely hope that visits of high level officials from Japan will intensify this year.

As for the economy, foundations are being set gradually, but steadily, for even more fruitful cooperation. The volume of certain Japanese companies' investments in Serbia, especially in IT sector, is growing and some encouraging examples in that area have been launched. Serbian companies also participated at the FOODEX Fair last year and new business contracts with Japanese counterparts have been made.

Another segment we would like to promote is tourism. Japanese tourists show growing interest in visiting Serbia and last year the number of Japanese visiting Serbia increased 67.8% from the year before, with the overall number of tourists also increasing significantly. Last year Serbia took part in JATA Tourism Forum and Travel Showcase and our booth attracted many visitors.

Cultural exchanges continue to flourish — we had numerous cultural events last year with famous Serbian artists and musicians performing in Japan. Embassy organized tourist and cultural promotion events, poetry readings, concerts, Serbian cooking classes and exhibitions booths were part of many fairs. Many of these events were held in cooperation and with the kind assistance of Japan-Serbia Association and the Association for Promotion of Music Exchange between Japan and Serbia.

It is my great pleasure to recall that last year Chairman Yohei Sasakawa of the Nippon Foundation was awarded a high decoration bestowed by the President of our country. It is my deep conviction that the future will bring even more opportunities to enrich our relations at all levels.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again my gratitude



**"White City": Belgrade, the capital and the largest city of Serbia, is seen from across the Sava River.** EMBASSY OF SERBIA

to The Japan Times for giving me the opportunity to address its esteemed readers on this joyous occasion. I would also like to thank all those Japanese friends and associates engaged in deepening our mutual understanding and developing our bilateral relations.

## Expand friendship and cooperation

Takehiro Togo  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-SERBIA EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan Serbia Exchange Association, I wish to express my heartfelt greetings.

Last year I wrote about the 130th Anniversary of Exchange of Letters between the King of Serbia and Emperor Meiji of Japan. On that occasion, numerous events were carried out in both Serbia and Japan, and with the participation of so many people in all areas

there is certainly a great future of deepening bilateral relations between the people of the two countries.

This year, I would like to celebrate the historic agreement on the commencement of Serbia's EU accession. I sincerely hope that we will see significant progress in negotiations this year. This will certainly contribute to the atmosphere of stability and cooperation in the Balkans.

On this occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia, I sincerely hope that friendship and cooperation will further expand and strengthen in all directions between our countries and peoples, much as we have been witnessing in recent days.

## Serbia key to stability, prosperity

Ichiro Aisawa  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-SERBIA  
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia.

Going through several transitions since the former Yugoslavian era, the Republic of Serbia has become what it is today. After a battery of bitter wars and disputes, Serbia today has developed into a leading country



among the Balkan States and is mobilizing the full potential of its people to create a platform for further growth.

Serbia is key to stability and prosperity in Southeast Europe and the Balkans and I sincerely expect that Serbia will realize a stable political system under the banner of freedom and democracy. With capable Serbian people working effectively, the Serbian economy should develop remarkably. Supported by its people's strong will and careful preparation, I believe Serbia's EU membership will be promptly realized.

Although a small country in terms of population, Serbia is a world leader in sports. Beginning with soccer, basketball and tennis, Serbian athletes will show their

outstanding performances in major meets, such as the Olympics in the future. Of course, I am well aware that Serbian people are also active in the areas of art and culture.

Japan and Serbia have a long history of friendship. I hope that our two countries will further deepen mutual understanding based on trust and respect for each other, and will develop the relationship to our mutual benefit. In the capacity of the president of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary Friendship League, I will do my utmost to enhance bilateral relations.

Finally, may I once again offer the people of Serbia my sincere congratulations on the occasion of their National Day.

Congratulations  
to the People  
of  
the Republic of Serbia  
on the Occasion  
of  
Their National Day



JAPAN TOBACCO INC.

JT Bldg., 2-1, Toranomon 2-Chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-8422, JAPAN  
Phone: (03) 3582-3111 Fax: (03) 5572-1463 URL: <http://www.jt.com>

Congratulations  
to the Republic  
of Serbia  
on the occasion of  
the National Day

KINCHO mosquito coil (the world's first mosquito coil)

Pyrethrum flowers are the source of 'pyrethroid' - a key insecticide component.

Serbia is home to such pyrethrum flowers and the insecticide manufacturer,

'KINCHO,' has an additional bond with Serbia.

Mr. Naohide Ueyama, KINCHO president, serves as Honorary Consul

General of the Republic of Serbia in Osaka.

The Pioneer of Household Insecticide in Japan

 **KINCHO**