

Poland national day

A year of milestones as Poland celebrates Constitution Day

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AMBASSADOR OF POLAND

On this auspicious occasion of the Constitution Day of the Republic of Poland I would like to extend my greetings and pay respect to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan, the Imperial family, the government and the people of Japan. In Poland we celebrate National Day on May 3, the same as Japan, to commemorate the adoption of the basic legal act by the parliament of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1791, Europe's first and world's second constitution.



amongst the community of nations, as an economic, political and cultural leader in Europe, and a beacon of hope for oppressed and transitional nations that democracy is attainable, even against seemingly insurmountable odds. Although the road to the successful transformation has not been easy, Poland is now recognized as one of the most successful post-communist economies in the world. Thanks to the strength, coming from its historical experience, today Poland is able to support other states in their process of transformation and struggle for democracy.

We are not alone in our efforts to promote common values of democracy. One of our long-time allies is Japan, which already has proved its willingness and determination to support such initiatives like the Eastern Partnership. This year Poland and Japan celebrate the 95th anniversary of diplomatic relations. We continue to treasure our relations with Japan, as many things bind us historically and we share common values of democracy, free market economy and human rights, which bring us together.

As the ambassador of Poland to Japan, I am pleased to recognize that the economic cooperation between Poland and Japan also blossoms to our mutual benefit. An important element in our bilateral relations was the visit of Poland's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy Janusz Piechocinski to Japan in October 2013.

The Polish economy has grown quickly for the last two

decades, even during the global economic and financial crisis. Our stable economic development attracted many foreign investments, especially from countries outside Europe. Japan has already almost 300 companies established in Poland, mainly in the automotive, electronics and infrastructure industries.



(Above) Built in the 14th century, Wawel Royal Castle in Krakow is part of the most historically and culturally important site in Poland. (Right) The Church of Peace in Jawor is one of only two existing 17th-century wooden Evangelical churches and is listed as UNESCO World Heritage site. MARIUSZ CIESZEWSKI, UNESCO

Japan was among the top four countries to which Polish export grew the most in 2013 (up by 15.7 percent compared with 2012). Last year Polish exports to Japan continued to grow, hitting a record level of \$1.029 billion, a year-on-year increase of 6.1 percent. Poland looks forward to a successful conclusion of negotiations on a Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement.

I am also immensely proud of world-class Polish researchers and their internationally

recognized achievements. Later this year we will continue in Tokyo a project titled "Expanding innovations by joining strengths," which aims at providing enhanced science and technology cooperation between Japan and Poland.

Poland and Japan continue also a very vital cultural exchange, as the interest and admiration in both countries of each other's culture remains strong. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Mangha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology in Krakow. In Japan, the "Chopin in Omotesando" festival will take place in June and the Polish Film Festival will be held in November. I also would like to invite you to watch the newest movie by renowned Polish film director Andrzej Wajda "Walesa. Man of Hope."

Last, but not least, I wel-



come all joint events and activities of the Visegrad Group (V4) and Japan Exchange Year, announced during Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Warsaw in June 2013.

To conclude, I also warmly invite you to visit Poland, a beautiful country stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Tatra Mountain and home to the

world's biggest population of white stork and European bison. While in Poland, do not miss the chance to visit, the old capital city of Poland, Krakow, which has been named by a popular European travel site as "the best European city trip in 2014."

May this be a successful year for Poland-Japan relations!



Biebrza National Park in northern Poland is home to many wild animals and birds, including white storks. MARIUSZ CIESZEWSKI

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to the People of

the Republic of Poland

on Their National Day



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