

Belarus national day

Working to strengthen ties in economy, science and technology

Sergei Rakhmaninov
AMBASSADOR OF BELARUS

Today, on July 3, the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus, let me, on behalf of the people and government of my country, express my deepest respect to the people of Japan, the Imperial family, the Prime Minister, the government of Japan, the prefectural governments and to all those who ensure the successful development of the country and strengthen its role in the global community.

2014 is a special year for the Republic of Belarus, as it is the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus from Nazi invaders. Belarus paid a colossal price for that — losing about 30 percent of its population — but it was a great contribution to the victory of humanity over unprecedented barbarism. Today, we celebrate the liberation of our country.

Last year was a favorable one for Belarusian-Japanese cooperation and we have taken important steps in the further development of all major areas.

We continued active cooperation in the sphere of rehabilitation of the areas affected by the nuclear power plant accident. In July, 2013, according to the Belarusian-Japanese in-



The BelAZ 75710, weighing 360 tons and having a carrying capacity of 450 tons, is a new dump truck from the Belarusian company. EMBASSY OF BELARUS

tergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of the rehabilitation of the territories affected by nuclear plant disasters, which was signed in December, 2012, a first meeting of the joint working group was held in Minsk. We continued our contacts in this area on the inter-parliamentary level due to the responsible approach of Japanese government officials from different parties. Contacts between the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in Japan together with Belarusian specialists and Fu-

kushima Prefecture became more systematic, including visits of children from the prefecture to Belarus at the invitation of the Belarusian government.

Another important step forward is the intensification of bilateral scientific and technological cooperation in that sphere involving specialized research centers and scientists. Problems concerning territory rehabilitation were also discussed during consultations between the foreign ministries of our countries in Minsk in July, 2013. We are preparing for

another round of such talks as well as for the second meeting of the joint working group in 2014, which will take place in Japan.

Economic cooperation between our countries has further deepened and developed. With Japan maintaining a positive trade balance in 2013, Belarus managed to increase its exports to Japan by five times while the volume of all Japanese investments to Belarus increased 50 times compared with 2010. Together with our traditional economic partners such as Marubeni, Toshiba, Sojitz, Sharp and Japan Tobacco, other large companies in the fields of trade, electronics and IT have also expressed their interest in developing economic cooperation with the Republic of Belarus. Representative offices of two Belarusian high-tech companies have been established in Japan and several associations of Belarus-Japan business cooperation have been created. For the first time in the history of our relations a national exhibition of the Republic of Belarus was organized for the Techno-Frontier 2013 international exhibition.

In order to further develop the overall cooperation between our countries, we must more fully exploit the potential we have. The unique logistics capabilities of Belarus as well as its involvement in large economic integration, specifically

the Eurasian Economic Union, which goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2015, are key points of interest for Japan.

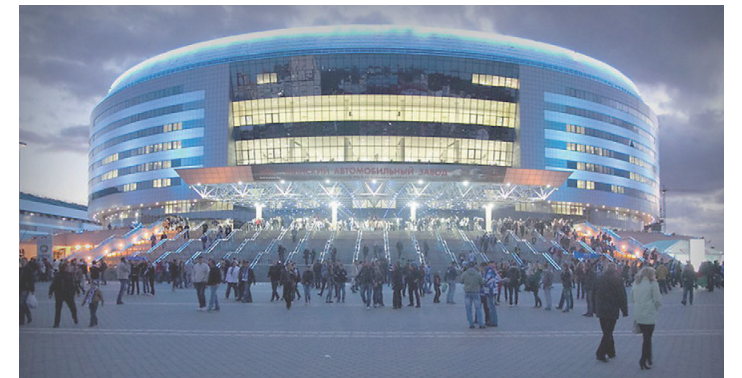
Despite the financial crisis, which led to a decrease in demand in many European countries and our high dependence on the import of energy resources, Belarus managed to prevent a loss of economic production and keep a positive international trade balance.

The 2014 Ice Hockey World Championships, which took place in Belarus in May, is another vivid example of our achievements. Belarus also showed remarkable results at the Sochi 2014 Olympics, winning five gold medals.

As one of the U.N. founding members and a peaceful state,

which unilaterally renounced the possession of nuclear weapons, Belarus is intensifying its efforts to participate in all international affairs. One of its highly supported initiative projects is the prevention of human trafficking. It has friendly relations with its neighbors and many other countries around the world.

Our people and government are happy to note the positive trends in the economy of Japan and the strengthening of its role in global cooperation, which is important for the steady development of the world in general. The Belarusians see Japan as a reliable partner and wish happiness and prosperity for the Japanese people.



Top, Minsk Arena was among the facilities to host the 2014 Ice Hockey World Championships in May. Above, the Belarusian national hockey team. EMBASSY OF BELARUS

Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Belarus
on the Occasion
of
Their Independence Day



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