

Brazil independence day



Clockwise from left, designed by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban, the 2014 "Soccer Pavilion," made of cardboard tubes, is installed at the forecourt of the Embassy of Brazil in Tokyo; President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet in Brazil on Aug. 1; Rio de Janeiro, which is home to the Carioca landscape, will host the 2016 Summer Olympics. EMBASSY OF BRAZIL/R. STUCKERT, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL



Brazil and Japan united as strategic, global partners

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AMBASSADOR OF BRAZIL

As we Brazilians commemorate our National Day on Sept. 7, I would like to invite all of our friends in Japan to join us in cherishing and celebrating not only a day, but also a very special year for relations between Brazil and Japan. This past August, during Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visit to my country, both governments decided to raise their bilateral ties to the level of a Strategic and Global Partnership. Japan is the second-largest economy among developed countries and Brazil is the second-largest economy among developing countries. Despite being on opposite sides of the planet, physical distance is no barrier to the will of our governments and our peoples to move closer to each other.



Brazil and Japan are often seen as key regional players, but, in fact, both are global players committed to building a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable planet, with strong multilateral institutions and a rule-based international system. This is why Brazil and Japan, together with India and Germany, founded the G-4, which is working to reform the U.N. Security Council. The four countries believe that the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Security Council depends on its expansion in both permanent and nonpermanent

categories of membership. It is a question of utmost urgency, since we will not be able to respond to the complex problems of this century with outdated and unrepresentative structures.

During Abe's visit to Brazil, both governments reinforced and enhanced their dialogue and cooperation on a number of global issues, including disarmament and nonproliferation, international security, human rights, climate change, sustainable development and poverty eradication. In order to build the future we want, based upon the results of the Rio+20 Conference, our countries must join efforts toward an ambitious and coherent development agenda. As founding members of the G-20, the group that gathers the twenty largest economies in the world, Brazil and Japan have much to contribute to the improvement of the current global economic situation. Whenever possible, quoting Abe's words at a business conference held in São Paulo, we should work together, or *juntos*, as he said in Portuguese, to progress, inspire and lead.

It is precisely because we want to work *juntos* that Brazil and Japan established their Strategic and Global Partnership. It provides an enhanced platform for innovative projects and approaches in traditional and new areas such as shipbuilding, infrastructure, science and technology, innovation, information and communications technology, space, energy, agriculture,

health, education, youth, sports and culture, among others. Exploring these avenues of cooperation in a balanced and mutually beneficial way is both possible and desirable, so we can harness our capabilities to their full potential. On Sept. 9 and 10, at the headquarters of Keidanren, Brazilian and Japanese authorities and businesspeople will meet in the framework of the XVII Joint Economic Committee. We all agree that there is no time to waste in strengthening and diversifying the economic pillar of our bilateral ties.

For Brazil, this year was also special because of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. We were very proud to organize what was arguably one of the most successful international mega-events. The World Cup was, first and foremost, an opportunity to show how Brazil is capable of delivering a flawless global tournament and, at the same time, throwing an extraordinary party — not to mention our taste for proving pessimists and naysayers wrong. The one million foreign tourists and the four billion viewers of the month-long event had a chance to glimpse the Brazilian way of life and work: a unique mix of efficiency and joy, modernity and ingenuity, openness and flexibility. Actually, after having spent a year in Japan, I would even venture to say that Brazilian and Japanese societies share, among other traits, the spirit of *omotenashi*, as we also like to entertain and care for our guests wholeheartedly.

Here in Tokyo, the Brazilian Embassy opened its own "Soccer Pavilion," a sustainable temporary building designed by renowned Japanese architect and 2014 Pritzker winner Shigeru Ban. During almost forty days of activities, the Pavilion welcomed more than 8,000 visitors, who tasted Brazilian food, listened to live Brazilian music, attended numerous events and had a chance to learn a bit more about the country and its culture. I take this opportunity to thank once again the friends of Brazil who helped make the Pavilion a success.

We must admit, however, that the results of the Brazilian and the Japanese national teams in the World Cup could have been somewhat better. At least their performances

served to underline our passion for soccer, no matter what, as well as our sportsmanship. Off the pitch, everything went even better than planned, and Brazil projected itself as a dynamic and diverse nation with a population of 200 million inhabitants, the world's seventh-biggest economy.

While there are still many challenges to be tackled, our achievements in social, economic and environmental dimensions of development are undeniable. For the first time in its history, Brazil became a middle-class country. We are a global reference in social inclusion and renewable energies. We are also a vibrant democracy and a place of cultural, racial and social tolerance — no doubt a legacy of our indigenous, European, Af-

rican and Asian roots, including the two million Brazilians of Japanese ancestry. It comes as no surprise, thus, that the spirit of *omoiyari* is another common trait in our societies, as we like to be compassionate and to put ourselves in someone else's place.

The topics of democracy and diversity bring me to another mega-event in 2014: the Brazilian general elections. Next month, more than 140 million citizens will cast their votes electronically to choose a president, 540 members of congress, governors of 26 states and the Federal District and more than a thousand members of state legislatures. Thanks to voting technology entirely developed in Brazil, the final results will be known in less than two hours. Brazil-

ian registered voters in Japan will be able to cast their electronic ballots in Tokyo, Nagoya, Hamamatsu and seven other cities, an example of the services and rights ensured by our consular network to the 180,000 Brazilians living in this country.

Finally, next year Brazil and Japan will celebrate the 120th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. We are already working on a series of special events

to mark the occasion and to bring to Japan an extra dose of the Brazilian lifestyle, following on the successful initiative of the 2014 Soccer Pavilion in Tokyo and preparing for the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. Promoting a better understanding of our values and cultures is certainly one of the best ways to pave the road to the next 120 years of the Strategic and Global Partnership between Brazil and Japan.

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to the People of Brazil
on the Occasion of the 192nd Anniversary of
Their Independence



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