

Turkey national day

Economic growth, democracy, peace and security

Ahmet Bülent
AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY,

It is a great pleasure for me to address the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of the 91st anniversary of the Republic of Turkey. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest greetings to our Japanese friends and my congratulations to the Turkish community living in Japan.



Today, we celebrate the 91st anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey. The Turkish nation, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, gained victory through great sacrifices in its struggle for ending foreign occupation after World War I and declared the Republic on Oct. 29, 1923. After nine decades of steady progress, Turkey now stands as an embodiment of Atatürk's ideals and vision: a secular democracy, a social state of law, an active member of the Euro-Atlantic community and a dynamic free market economy supported by a vibrant private sector and a young, well-educated population. These are important achievements of our nation, reached in the relatively short lifetime of our Republic.

At present, Turkey stands as the world's 16th largest economy and the 6th biggest in Europe. Next month, she will assume the chairmanship of the G-20. In the last twelve years, thanks to domestic stability, structural reforms and 5 percent average annual growth, Turkey has risen as a reliable economic partner of Japan.

Our 2023 Vision, the year that coincides with the centennial of the Republic of Turkey,

aims to make the country one of the top ten economies in the world. The 2023 Vision envisages a new and more vibrant Turkey with a population of 80 million people, a \$2 trillion GDP, \$25,000 in per capita income and exports exceeding \$500 billion.

In fact, Istanbul has already become an outstanding commercial and financial hub in the region. In a four-hour flight radius, one can access a huge market of 1.6 billion people, \$26 trillion in GDP and \$8 trillion in trade. Therefore, not only Turkey's prospering market of 77 million people, but also her vast neighborhood, present golden opportunities for the Japanese business world.

Turkish Foreign Policy is based on the principle of "Peace at Home, Peace in the World" as set out by Atatürk. It is with this understanding that Turkey pursues a dynamic and visionary foreign policy with a view to steering developments in a positive direction, in a region where the impact of global change are greatest. This role is especially vital, in the face of the recent surge of terrorist groups and armed conflicts in our region, where extremism and violence is unfortunately on the rise. Thanks to her proactive, realistic and humanitarian foreign policy, Turkey is an island of peace and stability in an increasingly volatile part of the world.

While attaching particular importance to its Trans-Atlantic ties, Turkey is also deepening her policies of reaching out to more distant regions, including the Asia-Pacific. In this general context, our relations with Japan are at a pivotal place.

This year we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Japan. Therefore, the formal



(Clockwise from above) The Bosphorus is a 22-mile strait that joins the Sea Marmara with the Black Sea in Istanbul and separates the continent of Europe and Asia; Air balloons are often seen hovering over Cappadocia, as ballooning is a popular activity to experience the fairy-tale like landscape from a birds-eye view; Turkish dishes are a fusion and refinement of Mediterranean, Caucasian, Balkan, Central Asian, and Middle Eastern cuisine. EMBASSY OF TURKEY

relations between the two countries are as old as the Republic. Yet, the origin of the bonds of friendship and solidarity go back to the closing years of the 19th century. Ironically, the tragic sinking of the Imperial Ottoman frigate Ertugrul, off the coast of Kushimoto, Wakayama Prefecture, in 1890, paved the way for the establishment of strong emotional bonds between our peoples. Next year we shall commemorate the 125th anniversary of this heartbreaking disaster.

Today, Turkey and Japan enjoy friendly relations in all fields. We share similar ideals

and common values. Both countries have similar approaches toward international issues.

The Strategic Partnership between our countries, declared and consolidated by three high level visits in 2013 and 2014, will certainly play a crucial role in the realization of Turkey's 2023 Vision. As of now, the Sinop Nuclear Power Plant Project and the Turkey-Japan Science and Technology University Project stand as the flagships of our Strategic Partnership.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate,

as the Ambassador of Turkey, my commitment to contribute to further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between Turkey and Japan. Our like-minded countries should develop more streamlined coordination with a view to addressing the challenges of today. I have no doubt that such a structured cooperation will be beneficial not only for the two countries, but also international peace, stability and prosperity.

With these thoughts, I would like to once again greet the readers of The Japan Times with my most cordial sentiments.



Congratulations

on the Occasion of
the 91st Anniversary of
the Proclamation of
the Republic of Turkey
and the 90th Anniversary of
the Establishment of
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Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic of Turkey
on the Occasion
of
Their National Day



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