

Romania national day

Continuously promoting shared values, economic cooperation

Radu Serban
AMBASSADOR OF ROMANIA

On the anniversary of the National Day of Romania, it is my particular privilege to express my respectful greetings and heartfelt best wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the members of the Imperial family, the members of the Japanese government and the friendly people of Japan, as well as to all readers of The Japan Times.

Every Dec. 1, the Romanian people celebrate the Great Union, achieved in 1918, when all the territories inhabited by Romanians joined together in a sovereign and unitary state.

The year 2014 has particular significance for the Romanian

people. Twenty five years ago, with the fall of communism, Romania rejoined the great family of democratic nations. Today, as a full-fledged member of the European Union since 2007, Romania is resolutely contributing to the consolidation of the values for which many Romanians lost their lives in the 1989 Revolution. The country is extending her support and expertise to countries in their transition to democracy, as a policy that brought indisputable benefits for the member states of the European Union and for the new candidate countries.

Also, this year we are celebrating ten years since Romania joined NATO. Although her membership history is not long, during this decade Romania has substantially contributed to significant NATO operations such as those in Afghanistan or with the coalition in Iraq, strongly asserting her



Coronation Cathedral, Alba Iulia ROMANIAN EMBASSY

irreversible commitment to the above mentioned values.

It is under such historic circumstances that Romania and Japan have been closely connected by a wide range of substantial ties, consolidated throughout the last decades.

Last year the ministers for foreign affairs of the two countries signed the Romania-Japan Joint Declaration on a Renewed Partnership, thus paving the way for a consolidated partnership into the 21st century and providing new oppor-

tunities for extended bilateral political dialogue, economic cooperation and cultural exchanges.

The bilateral dialogue between our countries has continued this year with the visit to Japan by H.E. Liviu Voinea, minister delegate for the budget. Fruitful discussions were held with H.E. Sadakazu Tanigaki, minister of justice and President of the Japan-Romania Parliamentary Friendship League; H.E. Nobuo Kishi, vice minister for foreign affairs; H.E. Yoshihisa Furukawa, senior vice minister of finance, as well as with Japanese business leaders. Also, in August, an official mission of the House of Representatives visited Romania, thus opening a new path to follow for an enhanced dialogue at the parliamentary level.

Economic cooperation is expanding at an accelerated pace. This year, new business

opportunities were created in fields such as infrastructure, energy and agriculture. For instance, during the last several years, the energy sector in Romania was the most dynamic sector of the Romanian economy. Romania has significant fossil fuel and hydroelectric resources, being one of Europe's traditional oil and gas producers. Romania holds a high ranking in Business Monitor International's Business Environment Ratings. The score reflects a relatively low level of energy import dependence, a high proportion of renewable energy and an established competitive landscape. Taking advantage of such potential, in July 2014, Marubeni Corporation established a joint venture with ELCEN, the biggest thermal energy producer in Romania, with a view to build a new 250 MW, gas-based electric power station. The investment will be



Voronet Monastery ROMANIAN EMBASSY

finalized by 2017. Other Japanese companies such as Yazaki intend to expand their already existing businesses in the manufacturing sector.

In order to identify new business opportunities, a special economic seminar was held in Osaka with the participation of Cristian Popa, vice governor of the National Bank of Romania.

Tourism is also a promising field. Romania has emerged as an attractive tourist destination for travelers from all over the world, with its wonderful landscapes and highly developed tourism infrastructure creating an ideal market for tourism-related investment. The number of tourists from Japan discovering her natural beauty and diversity, as well as her rich cultural heritage, has increased in recent years. Also, an increasing number of Romanians are seeking out Japan as a tourist destination.

Art is a good catalyst of our friendship, a good example being the sculptor Constantin Brancusi and his follower Isamu Noguchi. Cultural exchanges are thriving at an unprecedented level. It is our guiding policy to present to the Japanese public traditional and contemporary Romanian cultural values by actively developing projects, both in Romania and Japan, many of them with the kind support of Japan-Romania Friendship Associations.

The annual Romanian International Classic Music Contest, organized in Tokyo by the Japan-Romania Music Asso-

ciation, celebrated its tenth edition this year, providing another series of young musicians from Japan with the opportunity to be promoted to the world stage. For instance, violinist Maria Hara, winner of the fifth edition of the contest, participated to this year's edition of the George Enescu International Music Contest in Bucharest.

A team from Romania engaged in the "Eastern Connection" project, a unique cultural artist-in-residence program for dancers, producers and critics that began in 2013 and is sponsored by the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Gabriel Tudor Foundation in cooperation with "Festival Temps d'Image." The festival was held in Tokyo for two months this year, presenting its common work with a Japanese team and conducting creative workshops for university students learning contemporary dance.

Increasing academic exchanges are a constant feature of the ever-expanding bilateral interaction with more and more universities from Romania and Japan entering into cooperative relationships.

On behalf of Romanians from all over the world, I would like to extend an invitation to all our Japanese friends to come and visit Romania and to discover for themselves the richness and the unique beauty of her nature and culture, the friendliness of her people and the vast opportunities of cooperation for the mutual benefit of our two countries.

Congratulations
to the People of Romania
on the Occasion of
Their National Day



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National Day of Romania,
we send our warmest
wishes for progress,
happiness and prosperity
to all Romanian people.



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