

Argentina National Day

Reinvigorated ties with Japan

Alan Beraud
AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINA

This year 2016 is a very significant one for Argentina and for the relationship with Japan. On July 9 Argentina celebrates the Bicentennial of its Independence, heading toward its third century of independent life. A new century that is going to be enjoyed by us, our children and our grandchildren. We are building that legacy with our every day work and commitment to look forward to a better future based on our 200 years of history and on the same spirit of the patriots that imagined our future in 1816.

In 2016 Argentina and Japan both commemorate the 130th anniversary of the beginning of Japanese immigration to Argentina. Today, Argentina hosts the third-largest Japanese community and its descendants in Latin America — about 54,000 people. This long lasting partnership is an optimum ground for Japanese trade and investment decisions.

Bilateral diplomatic relations started in 1898 and they quickly became intense and fruitful. There are many memories from that time to be noted. As just a minor example, the Tokyo Metro was modeled on the Buenos Aires Metro or "el subte" as it is called in Argentina.

In a changing world, the traditional 118-year-old relationship between Argentina and Japan has been reinvigorated in 2016. On April 1, President Mauricio Macri and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met in Washington D.C. At that time, our leaders agreed to refresh and strengthen our bilateral ties and consolidate our political links while increasing our

trade and investment flows.

With the aim to place Argentina-Japan political, economic, investment and financial relations at center stage and to rapidly implement the leaders' agreements, just a month after their meeting, the Vice President of Argentina, Gabriela Michetti, visited Japan from May 10 to 13. It was her first visit outside Latin America since taking office. As many years had elapsed since the previous high-level political visit, she had meaningful and productive meetings with Abe; Finance Minister Taro Aso; Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Motoshi Hayashi, as well as with the president of the House of Councilors and members of the Lower House participating in the Japan-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship League. She also met with CEOs and presidents of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation, the Japan Overseas Infrastructure Investment Corporation for Transport & Urban Development and Nippon Export and Investment Insurance; and CEOs and presidents of Mitsubishi, Mitsui and Marubeni and other major enterprises. A forum organized by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee was held to develop the interest of senior officials and business people in the package of measures already implemented to boost Argentina's business environment and investment.

Renewed foreign policy exchanges came together with a fundamental expansion of our economic and trade relations. Argentina has recognized Japan as a priority country and as a source of quality and innovative investment while

many big Japanese companies are making and planning long term involvement in Argentina taking full advantage of the close relationship, its huge potential, actual opportunities and talented human capital.

A whole set of steps are in motion. JETRO is reinforcing its presence in Argentina alongside JBIC and JICA. Additionally, JETRO is also heading a trade and investment mission that is visiting Argentina in July. Argentina is reshaping its infrastructure and the government has outlined a \$100 billion investment plan for the next four years, covering energy, transport, urban development, and other sectors. The first big project deals with renewable energies, including wind, solar, thermal and biomass energy, to cope with climate changes commitments. Many leading Japanese companies are showing a strong interest in the tender procedure that sees the first stage start next August. Meanwhile, Toyota Motor Corp., a leader in the car industry in Argentina, has recently expanded its industrial plant capacity to

supply the South American market from Argentina and is working together with its Japanese auto-parts providers. Wine, jumbo shrimp, fish, olive oil, honey, mate, grape and lemon juice, cheese, animal feed, as well as metals and industrial products, are imported from Argentina with more in the pipeline.

Whenever Japan looks at South America, it looks at Argentina. Located in the southern end of South America, Argentina is the eighth-largest country by land area, and represents the second-largest economy in the subcontinent.

Argentina's 40 million people rank the highest in terms of human development in Latin America and the country is a world leader in gender equality. It is a healthy place to live, with no religious confrontations, racism, or political violence.

Argentina is ready to be discovered and enjoyed. Its weather — from subtropical to subantarctic — and landscapes are extremely diverse. For tourists looking for breathtaking

adventure, visiting Iguazu Falls, climbing Fitz Roy peak and the surrounding mountains, trekking the ice cliffs of the Perito Moreno glacier, horseback riding through the colorful mountains in Salta and Jujuy and the northern "quebradas" and "salares," and exploring Tierra del Fuego will leave unique, unforgettable memories. For tourists preferring peaceful enjoyment, the horizontal green ocean of "pampas" along with first-class cultural offerings and heritage, make Argentina and Buenos Aires — with its elegant architecture, its internationally famous gastronomy and legendary nightlife — a premium destination. A gastronomic tour following the "Route of Wine" along the rich vineyards of Mendoza to taste Malbec wine and other varieties to accompany the delicacies of the region will be unforgettable. Beef, the best in the world, is not only a must, but it is also a degustation experience to be repeated over and over again. Argentina and Japan share their enlighten-



The national Congress building in Buenos Aires INPROTUR

ment and delight with tango music and dance, which are part of the Argentine atmosphere, a feeling that Japanese people understand well.

This year is also the first time in Argentina's history in which its Foreign Minister, Susana Malcorra, is running for the position of Secretary-General of the U.N. She has vast experience within the U.N. system, including humanitarian peacekeeping and field operations. Her involvement with the

achievement of sustainable development and upholding human rights make her a highly valuable candidate for U.N. Secretary-General.

I wish to conclude expressing my sincere respects and wishes of well being to their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akhito and Empress Michiko and to all members of the Imperial house. I hereby also convey my respectful greetings to Prime Minister Abe, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, members of the

Cabinet, members of the Diet, especially participants of the Japan-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship League and to all the wonderful people of Japan whose friendship we Argentines treasure, appreciate, respect and cherish.

The Embassy of the Argentine Republic in Tokyo will keep working to strengthen and expand our longstanding bilateral relationship for the benefit of both our nations and their people.

Desire to deepen economic relationship

Ken Kobayashi
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-ARGENTINA
BUSINESS COOPERATION
COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee, I am delighted to extend my warmest congratulations to the people and government of Argentina as the country celebrates its 200th Independence Day on July 9.

Argentina has been always an important partner for Japan, and the two countries have enjoyed a long and amicable relationship for almost 120 years. Economically, Japan has primarily been importing food

and raw materials, while mostly exporting machinery and finished products. In recent years, Argentina's great potential as a source of lithium, shale gas and other important resources has also emerged. We feel that there are tremendous opportunities for further expanding business with Argentina.

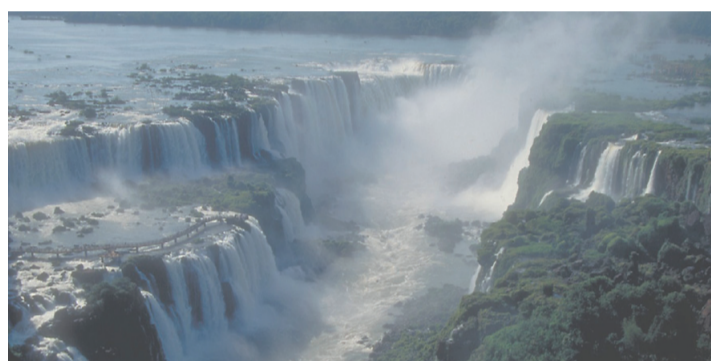
The new President, His Excellency Mauricio Macri, has made a series of economic and trade-related reforms since taking office last December. These have included an advance in settling the outstanding private debt issue that gives Argentina access to the inter-

national financial market. We are struck with great admiration at the seriousness with which these undertakings have been pursued.

In May, Her Excellency Vice President Gabriela Michetti visited Japan and attended a joint economic forum comprised of members of both the public and the private sectors. The Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee participated in this meeting as one of its organizers, and we were deeply impressed by her speech, which showed the strong will of Argentina to develop itself further as a global business partner.

To promote the expansion of bilateral business relations, the Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee will work to realize wider-ranging multilayered relationships in trade and investment, as well as success in related activities in close cooperation with the Argentine side.

Japan and Argentina have had a long history of interaction, and I am convinced that there are many more things that we will be able to achieve together. It remains our earnest desire to further deepen our relationship as both countries advance into the future.



Top: Iguazu Falls in Misiones province; Bottom: Los Glaciares National Park in Santa Cruz province INPROTUR



The Hill of the Seven Colors in Jujuy province INPROTUR

Congratulations to the People of the Argentine Republic on the 200th Anniversary of Their Independence

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