

Bolivia Independence Day

Country of opportunities boasts a promising future

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PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA

On the 191st Anniversary of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, I am delighted to commemorate this important day with the People of Japan and celebrate the long-standing relationship between Bolivia and Japan. The Embassy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia wishes to extend special greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the members of the Japanese government and the Japanese people.

On Aug. 6, Bolivians commemorate the 191st Anniversary of the Independence of Bolivia. Evo Morales Ayma was elected the first indigenous president of Bolivia in 2006, paving the way for a series of much-needed structural reforms that led to the enactment of a new Constitution in 2009 by means of which Bolivia was reborn as the Plurinational State of Bolivia, making it a Social Unitary State; free, independent, sovereign, democratic, intercultural, decentralized and autonomous.

Bolivia has respect for the peaceful and harmonious cohabitation between the peoples and nations of the international community. The country has been selected as a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council from 2017 to 2020 and has served as a member of the U.N. Human Rights Council from 2014 to 2017.

Our nation has been promoting and strengthening its relations in both the multilateral and bilateral arenas. Japan and Bolivia have 102 years of diplomatic relations that include an intense agenda of cooperation and investment, proving the existing brotherhood between our countries and cultures.

By means of the "Patriot Agenda 2025," Bolivia has implemented public policies to eradi-

cate extreme poverty and has seen a decrease from 41 percent of the population living below the line of poverty to 17.3 percent in 2014. The public policies undertaken have improved the redistribution of wealth and shown the highest economic growth in the past three decades. The IMF acknowledged that Bolivia reached an average per capita growth of 3 percent in the years between 2004 and 2014 and an average indicator of 1.2 percent between 2006 and 2014.

In 2013, our country obtained the highest level of direct foreign investment in Latin America, accounting for 5.9 percent of the GDP according to a report published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. In order to encourage further investment, Bolivia enacted Law #516, or the Investment Promotion Law, in 2014.

Economic Alternatives

Bolivia is classified as a commodity exporter, however, market shifts and ups and downs in the world economy have encouraged us to shift toward exporting non-conventional products and services such as renewable energy resources and non-traditional value-added products.

Our country has prioritized projects for the production of energy as a renewable resource such as the "Laguna Colorada" Geothermal Project, which is being financed and executed by means of an agreement entered into with the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that Bolivia has the largest Lithium reserves on the planet with an estimated total of 5.4 million metric tons accounting for 50 percent of the world's reserves.

During the past 10 years we have increased the production of non-traditional products by 50 percent; this includes oil seeds, cereal production, tubers and rootstocks. Evidently, the production of organic goods has become a prioritized endeavor and Bolivia has recognized the growing needs and the existing concern for

the consumption of goods that are not genetically modified.

Our Constitution states that sustainable rural development is a fundamental part of the economic policies of the state and that emphasis must be placed on food sovereignty and security by means of a sustainable and constant increase of agricultural production



Lake Titicaca is in the Andes on the border of Bolivia and Peru.

achieving better conditions for the rural productive sector.

According to the National Council of Ecological Production of Bolivia, our country has exported 150,000 tons of organic products in 2013, of which 80 percent is attributable to quinoa, while the balance is items such as coffee, cocoa and Brazil nuts. The council also stated that the

production destined for export is being strictly implemented through entities that abide by international norms for commercialization of these products.

In 2012, Bolivia proposed 2013 as the International Year of Quinoa; this motion was supported by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and approved by the U.N. in recognition of the Andean peoples that have maintained, controlled and protected quinoa as a source of nourishment for present and future generations. Our country is the only country that produces the quinoa variety known as "Quinoa Real" (Royal quinoa). This variety contains higher nutritional content and is organically produced in the region surrounding the Uyuni Salt Flats.

Our country's devotion to fulfilling these objectives is likely to position it as a leading supplier to the growing demand



Salar de Uyuni in southwest Bolivia is the largest salt flat in the world.

from organic niche markets.

Integration and tourism

We have become a country with high tourism potential as there is a variety of tourist attractions due to Bolivia's diverse culture, geographic differences, rich his-

tory and gastronomy.

The most-visited site is the Uyuni Salt Flats, boasting almost 15,000 Japanese tourists per year. The salt flats attraction lies in its natural beauty and contrasts that include the red and green lagoons that are the sanc-

tuary of the Andean Flamingo.

We wish to express that Bolivia has set an example to the international community by showing that social and economic policies have allowed our nations to live well. JALLALLA BOLIVIA!

Congratulations

to the People of
the Plurinational State of Bolivia
on the 191st Anniversary of
Their Independence

 Mitsubishi Corporation

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 Sumitomo Corporation

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