

(VIP visit special)

# Argentina President's Visit

## Economic, cultural bonds built on mutual respect

**ALAN BERAUD**  
AMBASSADOR OF ARGENTINA

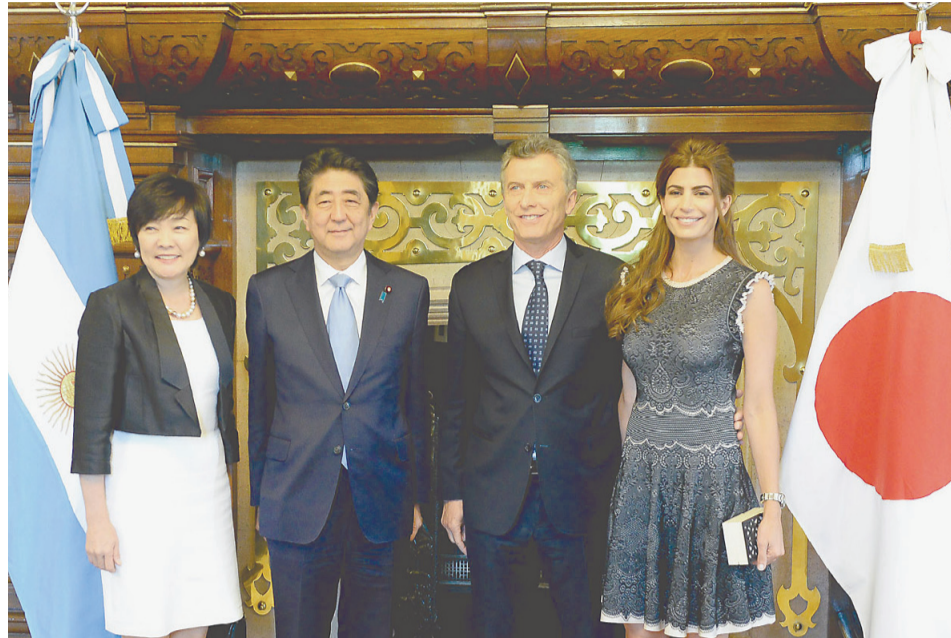


On May 25 Argentina celebrates its National Day. At the same time, the President of Argentina H.E. Mauricio Macri and the First Lady are visiting Japan from May 18 to 20, providing us with a double celebration.

Last November, Argentina and Japan established a strategic partnership. The exponential increase in the level of the bilateral relations is the outcome of fruitful meetings between our leaders. Since they first met in April 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Buenos Aires on November 21, and now our president is making an official visit to Japan accompanied by six of his cabinet ministers. Over the past year, both leaders have worked to reinvigorate and restructure Argentina-Japan bilateral relations. Today's discussion will be their third face-to-face meeting. An audience with Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko is also scheduled, as is a meeting with the Japan-Argentina Parliamentary Friendship League.

Other important happenings include an agreement on a reinforced mechanism for political consultations. Additionally, a bilateral investment treaty is in its final negotiation stage, while a third economic forum is taking place to foster networking among Japanese and Argentine businesspeople. The breadth and exceptional level of events taking place in this short period of time are the best evidence of the strength and depth of our friendship that is rooted in a long history and destined for a bright future.

While the Japan External Trade Organization dispatched a permanent resident representative to Argentina and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Japan Overseas Infrastructure Investment Corporation for Transport and Urban Development and the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation are ready to expand operations in Argentina to support Japanese investors there. Major Japanese corporations accompanied the prime minister and have been identifying new operations and new businesses through their local or regional branches. Investment in major infrastructure projects, particularly in the transport sector, are being launched and comprehensive programs to renew railways, ports, airports and logistics facilities are ongoing. Renewable energy projects along with sewage and



President Mauricio Macri (second from right) and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Buenos Aires in November. EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA

clean water provision for local communities are being tendered. Shale oil and shale gas, as well as offshore exploration and exploitation together with pipelines, are in motion. A friendly environment for investors is in place, including opportunities for joint ventures and equity investment between Argentine and Japanese small and medium-sized enterprises in agribusiness to target overseas and global markets.

Bilateral technical and trilateral cooperation are putting together the joint capabilities and resources of Argentine and Japanese experts. We expect that worldwide well-known premium Argentine beef, Patagonian lamb and fresh fruit will diversify our bilateral trade. Argentina will be hosting the World Trade Organization's

11th ministerial meeting later this year and the G-20 summit in 2018. Argentina's commitment to the multilateral trade system is crystal clear.

Argentina and Japan also pay great attention to culture and traditions and people-to-people exchanges. A very special connection links Argentina and Japan, with the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo preceded by the Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires in 2018. Let's work together for sport and for the everlasting friendship that sports involve.

Both countries are working closely together every day to strengthen their traditional ties to celebrate their 120th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2018 at a peak stage of their friendly relationship.



The congress building in Buenos Aires. INPROTUR



Iguazu Falls in Misiones province. INPROTUR

## Furthering trade and investment activities

**KEN KOBAYASHI**  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-ARGENTINA BUSINESS COOPERATION COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee, I am delighted to express my sincere welcome, as well as my heartfelt congratulations, upon the occasion of President of Argentina H.E. Mauricio Macri's visit to Japan.

Argentina has long been an important partner for Japan, and the two countries have enjoyed amicable and friendly relations for almost 120 years. From an economic standpoint, our relationship remains important through the trade of food, raw materials and finished products, as well as investment in a variety of sectors. However, we feel that there are yet many possibilities to expand business, considering Argentina's geographical and economic importance in the region.

The president has made a series of bold economic and trade-related reforms since taking office in December 2015, and Argentina has successfully restored its access to the international financial markets. Ambitious structural reforms are being unceasingly undertaken. We would like to express our great admiration for these efforts.

In May 2016, the Vice President of Argentina H.E. Gabriela Michetti visited Japan. Her visit was followed in November by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visit to Argentina — the first by a sitting Japanese Prime Minister in 57 years. Taking advantage of this opportunity, we held the Japan-Argentina Joint Business Committee conference with the Argentine committee in Buenos Aires on Nov. 21, where we adopted a joint

statement that was aimed at achieving an early conclusion of an investment agreement.

I am convinced that there is much more that we will be able to achieve by working together. The Japan-Argentina Business Cooperation Committee will work in close cooperation with the

Argentine committee to achieve wide-ranging, multilayered relationships in trade and investment and related activities.

In conclusion, we hope that the president's visit will be the catalyst for further activity in our bilateral economic relationship.

## Biography of President Macri

An engineer by training, President of the Republic of Argentina Mauricio Macri has held the office since December 2015, following a career in business, sports and politics as mayor of Buenos Aires.

During the presidential campaign, Macri earned the support of citizens and political parties across the ideological spectrum based on his "Let's Change" platform that looked for alternatives to the isolationist and populist policies of the past.

The president has made achieving zero poverty, defeating drug-trafficking and uniting Argentines under stronger democratic institutions as the three main commitments of his administration.

Prior to being elected, Macri served as mayor of Buenos Aires, first elected in 2007 and re-elected with 64 percent of the vote in 2011. As mayor, Macri pursued regeneration programs in many of the city's poorer areas, expanded access to early education and health care, improved the city's financial management and expanded arts and cultural investment.

He was also responsible for pushing through much-needed public transport and environmental initiatives to improve sustainable mobility in the city. He created the first rapid-transit bus system in the country, reducing

carbon emissions and traffic in Buenos Aires and its surrounding suburbs. He also expanded bike access and usage in Buenos Aires, creating 155 km of bicycle lanes and a citywide bike-share system, boosting the number of people that cycle in the city every day to over 150,000.

Before being elected mayor, Macri was president of Club Atletico Boca Juniors, the most popular soccer club in the country. Overseeing a vast operation, Macri reduced debt and repaired years of financial mismanagement — resulting in the team's most successful period in decades, winning several major domestic titles and international trophies.

After graduating with a degree in civil engineering from the Catholic University of Argentina, Macri undertook postgraduate studies at the Columbia Business School in New York, later working in the automobile and construction sectors as an engineer, business analyst and executive.

In 1991, he was kidnapped and held for ransom for 14 days, an episode he has said led him to focus his career on public service to reduce poverty, violence and corruption.

Macri is married to businesswoman Juliana Awada and has four children. He was born in 1959 in Tandil, Argentina.

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President Mauricio Macri  
of the Argentine Republic  
on His Official Visit to Japan

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Our Heartiest Welcome to H.E. Mauricio Macri, President of Argentina, and His Wife on Their Official Visit to Japan

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