

# Venezuela National Day

## Nurturing relations across the globe

**SEIKO ISHIKAWA**  
AMBASSADOR OF VENEZUELA



On the occasion of the 206th Anniversary of the Independence of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of our government and our people, I am honored to convey our renewed commitment to the continued friendship between Venezuela and Japan and to extend my best wishes of happiness, health and prosperity to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Japanese government and its people. On this auspicious celebration, I would like to wish a happy

National Day to all the members of the Venezuelan community in Japan.

This year has been an eventful one for Venezuela. We greatly appreciate the united calls of support by countries in the world for the national political dialogue that President Nicolas Maduro has been promoting to end the violent demonstrations. Recently, various countries, including the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Uruguay and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, have been invited to join the efforts sponsored last year by the Union of South American Nations with the participation of the former President of Panama Martin Torrijos, former President of the Dominican Republic Leonel Fernandez, former President of Colombia Ernesto Samper and former Spanish Prime Minister Rodriguez Zapatero, through the mediation of

Pope Francis.

In spite of the extreme vandalism and violence by radical groups in small areas of Venezuela — affecting 31 out of a total of 335 municipalities — the majority of Venezuelans continue to hang on to their peace-loving spirit and their faith. The results of the most recent surveys conducted by a private and independent firm confirm that 84 percent of the people agree to a political dialogue between the Bolivarian government and the opposition and 80 percent are against the violent demonstrations. Venezuelans will find a peaceful solution to their problems through their own means and efforts.

Meanwhile, Venezuela continues to nurture relationships across the globe. It exerts its leadership in different multilateral and regional forums, currently pre-

siding over the Non-Aligned Movement, and having successfully organized its summit at Venezuela's Isla de Margarita in September. Additionally, Venezuela was also elected as president of the Association of Caribbean States in March.

Relations with Japan are no exception. Starting in October and throughout 2018, we will celebrate the 80th anniversary of friendly bilateral relations between Venezuela and Japan and 90 years since the first Japanese immigration to our country.

This month we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the historic visit to Venezuela by His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito. As we continue to cherish this historic moment, I would like to express my steadfast commitment to further and deepen the friendly ties between our two countries and peoples.



The Ensemble Lara Somos and the White Hand Chorus of Venezuela, part of the Special Education Program of El Sistema, are comprised of people with disabilities. They will visit Japan in October to perform alongside the newly created White Hand Chorus of Tokyo. FUNDAMUSICAL

## Further enhancing economic ties

**KEN KOBAYASHI**  
CHAIR, JAPAN-VENEZUELA ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, KEIDANREN



I had the privilege to assume the post of the chair of the Japan-Venezuela Economic Committee of Keidanren on May 31. On behalf of the committee, I would like to convey my heartfelt

congratulations to H.E. President Nicolas Maduro and the people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on their 206th Anniversary of Independence.

For many years, Venezuela and Japan have enjoyed favorable economic relations. Not only does Venezuela boast one of the largest crude oil reserves in the world, but Venezuela also has other abundant natural resources such as natural gas and iron ore, making the country important for Japan in terms of diversification of resources. I hope the business environment in Venezuela

continues to improve and our bilateral economic ties will deepen further.

Though Venezuela is geographically distant, I have heard that people in the country, especially the young, are increasingly interested in Japan, as well as the Japanese culture in recent years, and the number of people studying Japanese is on the rise. The Japanese embassy in Venezuela has strived to disseminate information by holding events to introduce Japanese culture around the country. Additionally, we have various opportunities in Japan to experience Venezuelan culture such as the world-renowned El Sistema youth orchestra's Japan tour and Venezuelan Cultural Week. I hope that these interesting opportunities further boost our bilateral exchanges.

In conclusion, I sincerely wish the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its people peace and prosperity on their anniversary of independence. The Japan-Venezuela Economic Committee will continue to do its best to enhance the economic relations between the two nations and help contribute to a mutually beneficial future.

## Many opportunities in energy

**TOSHIHIRO NIKAI**  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-VENEZUELA FRIENDSHIP COUNCIL



As chairman of the Japan-Venezuela Friendship Council, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the government and people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the occasion of the 206th Anniversary of the country's Independence.

Venezuela is one of the few attractive countries in which to invest in the Latin-American region, as it offers the great potential of abundant natural resources and the energy sector offers multiple opportunities to undertake mutually beneficial cooperation with Japan. Both countries maintain excellent friendly ties and during the last decades have established complementary relationships, especially in the promotion of the economic and the energy sectors.

This year, the government of Venezu-

ela announced new economic measures aimed at promoting domestic production amid a deep recession triggered by the slump of global oil prices. Additionally, the government also announced new executive decrees to promote joint public-private investment in agricultural production and mining in the Orinoco Mining Arc, a vast area of 112,000 sq. kilometers of strategic mineral resources across the southeastern state of Bolivar.

I would also like to emphasize the efforts of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, to promote a national dialogue between all sectors to achieve peace and continue the path of coexistence and harmony among all Venezuelans.

Japan and Venezuela are preparing to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations next year. With this in mind, I am confident that Japan and Venezuela will continue to work together in exploring new development projects based on friendship and the complementarity of the two economies for mutual benefit.

## Working for peace, prosperity

**TAKEO HIRANUMA**  
PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN-VENEZUELAN PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE



On behalf of the Japan-Venezuelan Parliamentary Friendship League, I extend my warmest congratulations to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its people on the celebration of the 206th Anniversary of their Independence.

The bilateral relationship between Japan and Venezuela have been promoted and strengthened, especially in the energy field, since both countries established diplomatic relations on Aug. 28, 1958.

Next year will be a significant one as it will see the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of our friendly relations. This occasion will give us the opportunity to renew our cordial ties, mutual understanding and cooperation on common grounds on many bilateral and multilateral issues for the future of both

countries.

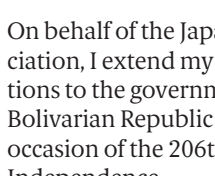
The Venezuelan government of President Nicolas Maduro has made tremendous advancements in improving social programs for the benefit of the Venezuelan people, despite the current economic difficulties that the country is experiencing.

I also wish to add my voice to the call made by the Venezuelan government to promote dialogue among all sectors of the country to achieve peace and prosperity.

As the president of the Japan-Venezuelan Parliamentary Friendship League, I would like to convey the joy of being a special part of the development of our friendly ties, as well as continue to promote our bilateral cooperation and mutual trust between both nations.

## Cultural exchanges mark friendly relationship

**MASATERU ITO**  
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-VENEZUELA ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan-Venezuela Association, I extend my sincere congratulations to the government and people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the occasion of the 206th Anniversary of their Independence.

Japan and Venezuela maintain a traditionally friendly relationship and cultural exchanges between both countries have been constantly active. The Japan-Venezuela Association also endeavors to further strengthen bilateral ties through initiatives and activities such as running conferences on various topics related to Venezuela.



Anita Reyna, president of the board of directors of NGO Fundacion Tierra Vida, recently held a conference on "Venezuela and Sustainable Development in the Orinoco Delta."

In addition to promoting friendship among Japanese and Venezuelan members through the annual party on Venezuelan Independence Day, a beer party in the summer and the annual Christmas party, the association also conducts very popular Venezuelan cooking classes from time to time. Venezuela is a trea-

sure house of little-known music and the cuatro music classes that began in Cafe y Libros in Meguro, Tokyo, in 2009 are also very popular and seeing increasing numbers of learners.

It is indeed a pleasure to see that Japan and Venezuela are deepening their bilateral cooperation in the areas of cultural, artistic and intellectual exchanges, promoting better understanding between both countries and bringing the two nations closer.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our warmest felicitations on this historic day, and assure all our Venezuelan friends that the Japan-Venezuela Association will continue to contribute to the strengthening of our bilateral relationship.

## Congratulations

to the People of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the Occasion of the 206th Anniversary of Their Independence

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