

Brazil Independence Day

An ever-closer partnership

ANDRE CORREA DO LAGO
AMBASSADOR OF BRAZIL



On the occasion of the National Day of Brazil in 2017, it is my pleasure to invite all to remember and cherish a historic moment in the very special relationship between my country and Japan.

In May 1967, Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko — crown prince and princess at the time — visited Brazil for the first time. Their itinerary included Brasilia (the modern Brazilian capital, founded seven years earlier), Sao Paulo (which was and remains the largest Japanese community outside of Japan), Rio de Janeiro (the Brazilian capital between 1763 and 1960) and Ipatinga in Minas Gerais state, symbol of one of the most tra-

ditional economic partnerships between Brazil and Japan.

Their majesties had the opportunity to meet great Brazilian personalities not only of that time, but also of all time such as architect Oscar Niemeyer, painter Manabu Mabe and composer Ataulfo Alves. Brazil was living one of its best moments in terms of creativity and cultural effervescence. The "golden era" of Brazilian architecture and bossa nova were at their zeniths. New and important names and trends were emerging in music, visual arts, design, film and theater.

On May 22, 1967, the Imperial Couple also put their names indelibly in the history of Brazilian diplomacy. They were the first state guests officially welcomed at the Itamaraty Palace of Brasilia, the headquarters of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry in the new capital of the nation. A masterpiece by Niemeyer, the building was conceived as an instrument of Brazilian foreign policy, projecting an ideal of a nation in constant modernization and global ascension — and bringing together some of the country's greatest talents in architecture, painting, sculpture, design and landscaping.

At every stage of their visit, their majesties witnessed the affection and the admiration of Brazilian society for Japan, its people and its culture. Fifty years ago, there



The Brazilian Foreign Ministry is celebrating this year the 50th anniversary of Itamaraty Palace in Brasilia, a masterpiece by Oscar Niemeyer and its headquarters in the nation's capital. MRE



Their majesties arrive in Rio de Janeiro on May 26, 1967. STATE ARCHIVE OF SAO PAULO

were 600,000 Brazilians with Japanese ancestry (today, they are almost 2 million). Regardless of origin, the crowds that followed the Imperial Couple were perfectly aware of the main reason making our relationship so special; the human bonds and the invaluable Japanese contribution to the diversity of the Brazilian national identity.

As pioneers of the Itamaraty Palace, as main guests of a ceremony with 60,000 Nikkei at Pacaembu Stadium in Sao Paulo, or just as two people interested in the history, the culture and the lifestyle of Brazilians, their majesties contributed to bringing the two countries together. They expressed confidence in the potential of our partnership, as well as their admiration for the Brazilian ability to integrate people. New visits would come later in 1978 and 1997, but it was a week in May 1967 that the Imperial Couple galvanized a nation —



As the first official guests of the new Itamaraty Palace in Brasilia, the Imperial Couple climb the grand staircase on May 22, 1967. PUBLIC ARCHIVE OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT

and helped to strengthen the eternal bonds between Brazil and Japan.

In order to pay tribute to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to all the Brazilians and Japanese who worked for the success of that memorable journey, the Embassy of Brazil in Tokyo will host the exhibition "Strengthening Eternal Bonds: 50 Years of the First Visit of Their Majesties to Brazil" from Sept. 11 to Oct. 6. It is sponsored by Mitsui & Co., Mitsubishi Corp., Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp., IHI Corp. and Banco do Brasil, with the support of Anbec, the Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in Japan and Brastel. I would like to once again thank our sponsors and supporters, and invite all readers of The Japan Times to visit the exhibition in our Aoyama building — a project by one of the most famous Brazilian architects, Ruy Ohtake.



Their majesties at the cover of O Cruzeiro, Brazil's leading news magazine in 1967. DIARIOS ASSOCIADOS



Sixty thousand Brazilian Nikkei filled Pacaembu Stadium in Sao Paulo to see the Imperial Couple on May 25, 1967. STATE ARCHIVE OF SAO PAULO



"Strengthening Eternal Bonds: 50 Years of the First Visit of Their Majesties to Brazil"
Where: Embassy of Brazil, Manabu Mabe and Tomie Ohtake Halls, 2-11-12 Kita-Aoyama, Tokyo (near Gaienmae Station on

the Tokyo Metro Ginza Line)
When: Sept. 11 to Oct. 6, Monday to Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (follow www.facebook.com/brasembtokyo to check special hours and the schedule for guided tours)
Admission: Free

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(Anniversary special)

Brazil Independence Day

Economy back on sustained growth track

Brazil is a global player with a high degree of economic diversification, the second-largest gross domestic product among developing nations and a consumer market of 208 million people. It is home to one of the most modern, efficient and competitive agribusiness sectors in the world — and to the third-largest commercial aircraft maker. It is also home to some of the most abundant natural resources on the planet, including a rich biodiversity.

Brazilians have built a vigorous democracy, with strong and well-proven institutions, as well as a vibrant culture and lifestyle — based on the unique mix of Native American, European, African, Middle Eastern and, starting in 1908, Japanese roots. They are known worldwide as a creative, diverse, interesting, warm and welcoming people. They are also innovative and committed to sustainable development.

The Brazilian government, supported by a large and stable coalition in parliament, is now engaged in promoting reforms that are considered central to ensure the full realization of the country's huge potential. Fiscal soundness was strengthened through a constitutional amendment, enacted in 2016, that caps public expenditure. Labor legislation was recently modernized and the tax system is being simplified, improving the business environment. A thorough social security reform is on its way. Inflation is under control, at an annual rate of 3.5 percent, and interest rates are falling. After regaining private investor confidence, the country is finally back on a track of sustained growth.

A key component of the government's agenda is an ambitious initiative of infrastructure concessions: the Investment Partnership Program (PPI). The program was designed not only to improve the country's infrastructure in partnership with the private sector, but also to provide clearer, more secure and transparent rules with less state intervention. In August,



With 21 million inhabitants, the greater Sao Paulo metropolitan area produces 18 percent of the Brazilian GDP and is the largest financial center in the Southern Hemisphere. SPTURIS

57 new projects were added to the PPI, including airports, highways, ports, state-owned enterprises and transmission lines, among others. Congonhas Airport in Sao Paulo, the Brazilian Mint and the power company Eletrobras are in the recently announced list.

Since the 1950s, Japan has been a most cherished economic partner of Brazil. The iron ore mining complex and the tropical agriculture revolution that opened the Cerrado to soybean cultivation are just two examples of what Brazilians and Japanese have accomplished together.

Now, as strategic and global partners, our countries are once again ready to join endeavors and better explore synergies in a new phase of the bilateral relationship. In October, during the visit of President Michel Temer to Japan, both governments signed a memorandum of cooperation to promote investment in infrastructure. The timing could not be better to turn its words into reality, creating more opportunities for Japan to invest in Brazil and to strengthen our partnership even more.

This text was provided by the Embassy of Brazil.



A legacy of the Rio 2016 Olympics, the VLT Carioca light rail system now serves downtown Rio de Janeiro. GOVERNMENT OF BRAZIL

**Congratulations
to the People of Brazil
on the Occasion of
the 195th Anniversary of
Their Independence**

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