

Uruguay Independence Day Special

Economic bonds help promote friendly relationship

CESAR FERRER
AMBASSADOR OF URUGUAY



Aug. 25 marks the 193rd anniversary of the National Independence of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay. On this important occasion, I am honored to convey my respectful greetings to Their

Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, members of the government, institutions and people of Japan, as well as the Uruguayan nationals who live, study and work here.

Our mutual understanding is based on deep-rooted, common values such as the promotion and protection of human rights, respect for international law and commitment to world peace. Uruguay and Japan will reach 100 years of diplomatic relations in 2021. Both countries have also coordinated successfully as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council from 2016–2017.

Every Uruguayan president over the last 20 years has visited Japan. In 2015, the

meeting of President Tabare Vazquez and the prime minister was an opportunity to reaffirm the ties between both countries and add a significant dynamism to economic relations, as well as to confirm that both countries are reliable partners. High-level visits and political dialogue between authorities and members of parliament foster mutual understanding and shared views on bilateral, regional and world affairs.

Our economic relations have followed a path of trust and growth that hit an important milestone last year with an agreement on the liberalization, promotion and protection of investments going into force. This agreement guarantees a secure framework for Japanese and Uruguayan companies. Additionally, the deepening of ties between Mercosur (a South American trade bloc made up of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) and Japan will bring a new perspective to our economic relationship.

Traditionally, Uruguay, with its fertile land and good weather, has been a prime food producer and exporter, taking care of environmental and social aspects via sustainable processes. The discerning Japanese market is already welcoming our fine wines, olive oil, honey, propolis, caviar and



President Tabare Vazquez and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during Vazquez's official visit to Japan in November 2015. PRESIDENCY OF THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY

frozen fish.

On the topic of animal health requirements, the mutual cooperation between our experts will soon allow Japanese people to enjoy Uruguayan beef, and at the same time, Uruguayans can enjoy wagyu beef. This will be an important landmark in our relations.

Japan's technical cooperation with Uruguay has resulted in the spread of a strong feeling of appreciation and respect among the Uruguayan people. I would like to thank Japan for the economic and techni-

cal assistance that Uruguay has received over the years, especially the excellent work completed by Japan International Cooperation Agency's volunteers in Uruguay.

Regarding sports exchanges, this November, Uruguay is slated to host the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup where Japan is among the favorites, and we look forward to the presence of Japanese fans in Uruguay. Next year, Japan will host the Rugby World Cup, for which Uruguay's national team "Los Teros" has qualified, and in 2020 Tokyo will host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Likewise, cultural activities and people-to-people contacts facilitate general knowledge and promote closeness, especially youth and local government exchanges support that important goal.

As ambassador of Uruguay in Japan, I'm sure we will continue working with Japanese authorities, ministries and entities to promote and expand our links and common understanding even further, believing that our countries are much closer in values and common projects than our geographical distance.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



The Legislative Palace in Montevideo was inaugurated in 1925 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the declaration of independence of Uruguay. MINISTRY OF TOURISM OF URUGUAY

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