

# Armenia National Day Special

## Peaceful resolutions drive nation forward

GRANT R. POGOSYAN  
AMBASSADOR OF ARMENIA



Today, we celebrate the 27th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Armenia. On this day in 1991, the people of Armenia declared the establishment of a new independent

state following a nationwide referendum. Sept. 21 was subsequently designated the National Day of the Republic of Armenia.

On this commemorative day of the modern Armenian state, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to my compatriots, as well as to all our friends in Japan and elsewhere in the world.

Japan was among the first countries to recognize the new Armenian state, and on Sept. 7, 1992, diplomatic relations between the two nations were formally established.

The friendly relations between Armenia and Japan have seen many positive developments in the past 26 years. The mutual establishment of embassies in our capital cities, the friendship leagues in both Armenian and Japanese parliaments and the cultural groups and friendship associations that are active in both countries have been boosting our ties and reinforcing our partnership in all areas.

Our bilateral relations have been highlighted by various reciprocal visits, the most recent of which was the visit of H.E. Taro Kono, minister of foreign affairs, to Armenia from Sept. 2 to 4 this year. This visit marked one more solid step toward deeper bilateral ties between the two countries. Further high-level visits will

surely broaden the foundation for the next decades of partnership.

Since 1991, the Republic of Armenia has swiftly evolved into a fully acknowledged member of the United Nations, as well as many major international organizations. Thus, Armenia has become a trustworthy partner to most of the world's nations.

Despite the relatively young age of its modern state, Armenia is in fact one of the longest-lasting civilizations in the world and is proud of its historical heritage, unique language, distinctive culture and rich traditions.

While cherishing the nation's past, the Armenian people today are striving to build a modern state that prospers within a democratic political system that upholds international human rights and supports a free-market economy. Over the past decades, the Republic of Armenia has shown substantial progress in nation-building and has demonstrated significant achievements in the economic and social spheres.

This year, Armenia has completed its transition from a presidential system of governance to a parliamentary republic. On April 9, Armen Sarkissian was elected the fourth president of the Republic of Armenia by the National Assembly.

Under the new system of governance, the president is the head of state and serves a single seven-year term of service. On April 17, the National Assembly voted for Serzh Sargsyan, the third president, to take the office of the prime minister. This event triggered public protests and fast-growing rallies across the country led by the charismatic leader of the opposition, Nikol Pashinyan. A week later, president Sargsyan announced his resignation as prime minister and on May 8, Pashinyan was elected as

prime minister of the Republic of Armenia. These changes happened in Armenia in spring, a period that is often referred to as the "velvet revolution," because of the very peaceful nature of the public marches on the streets and squares of Armenia.

Once again, the people of Armenia and its political leaders have demonstrated their commitment to the principles of democracy, political dialogues and compromises, thus putting the values of the people's will and peaceful resolution of issues as an utmost priority.

Armenia is becoming a holiday destination for a growing number of tourists from all corners of the world. Armenia's rich history, unique culture, UNESCO World Heritage sites, exquisite cuisine, classical and jazz music, beautiful nature, world-class hotels, warm hospitality and a very high level of safety are the components that made the tourism industry a key sector of the Armenian economy.

In particular, we are very happy to host a growing number of visitors from Japan. Despite the increasing interest Japanese tourists show in Armenia, a lack of information published in Japanese about Armenia still remains. Considering this, for our Japanese friends, I wrote the book "Discover Armenia in 25 Stories" in Japanese, which was published last December and dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic ties.

On this celebratory occasion, I wish peace and prosperity to the people of Japan and all readers of The Japan Times around the world.

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



**Above: The 2,800th anniversary of Yerevan will see the culmination of celebrations at the end of October, when people will enjoy various festive events. Below: The 17th Summit of the International Organization of La Francophonie will be held in Armenia in mid-October.**

*Congratulations  
to the People of the Republic of Armenia  
on the 27th Anniversary of Their Independence*

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