

Hungary National Day Special

Stability the key to leadership in the heart of Europe

NORBERT PALANOVICS
AMBASSADOR OF HUNGARY



In the autumn of 1956, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians rose up against occupying Soviet forces with high hopes for victory and external support, but history took a different turn. Thousands

of Hungarians were killed or injured, and the revolution was crushed. Nevertheless, this was the first dent in the Iron Curtain. We learned our lesson — freedom never comes for free. Freedom and peace are often fought for alone, but sometimes like-minded friends and allies stand with us. Each year, we remind ourselves that the sacrifices made for our freedom were not in vain and we always remember the help and support given to us by our friends and allies, such as Japan, during our biggest struggles and difficulties.

Hungarians have done a lot for the free and peaceful country that Hungary is today.

We were not afraid to lead the way toward our goals, and as a result, Hungary became one of the first countries of the former Eastern bloc states to join the free and democratic world. Through all the difficulties faced during the transitional years of the 1990s, Hungary stood strong and had the courage to dream of a Hungarian nation that can lead. Almost three decades later, that dream seems to be coming true.

With one of the most stable governments in Europe, we envision Hungary as becoming one of the best places to live and work within the European Union by 2030. Though it is a long way with many challenges to face, we believe that we have all the attributes needed to reach our goals. Exceptional higher education, groundbreaking innovations, an open economy with the lowest corporate tax rate in Europe, one of the fastest-growing gross domestic products in the EU, excellent soil quality allowing agriculture to reach its full potential and a dynamic Central European environment, which is now the core of Europe's economic development, give us hope that we are on the right path.

Hungary is currently a bustling business hub

that was recently named by one of the most popular U.S. investment magazines as the best country for investment in the Eastern European and Central Asia region. Hungary also achieved the No. 1 ranking for investment volume per capita. With more than 150 Japanese companies operating in our country, the economic ties with Japan have never been better.

Our relationship with Japan started in 1869 and since then has been deepened by our many bilateral exchanges over the years. By celebrating the 150th anniversary of our diplomatic relations in 2019, I am confident that the cultural, political and economic links between our nations will reach new highs, and that the events we will organize next year will further strengthen the friendship between Japan and Hungary. I also strongly believe that our anniversary activities will provide many opportunities for the readers of The Japan Times to experience both the traditional as well as the new and modern face of Hungary in Japan.

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



Top: The Szechenyi Chain Bridge on the Danube River connecting Buda and Pest, with Buda Castle in the background. Above: St. Stephen's Basilica in Budapest. EMBASSY OF HUNGARY

Congratulations

on the Occasion of
the National Day of
Hungary

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